

K A R L   G R U B E R

**BETWEEN  
LIBERATION  
AND  
LIBERTY**

**A U S T R I A   I N   T H E  
P O S T - W A R   W O R L D**



## **BETWEEN LIBERATION AND LIBERTY**



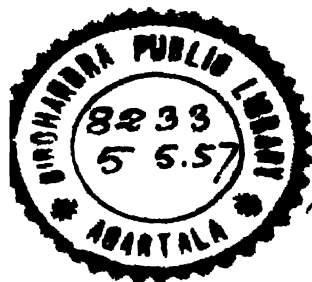


~~CARDEN~~

# BETWEEN LIBERATION AND LIBERTY

AUSTRIA IN THE POST-WAR WORLD

*Translated by*  
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ANDRE DEUTSCH

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## AUTHOR'S NOTE

It is an untenable viewpoint that a Foreign Minister should never write a book. The means that he chooses to propagate his views must be left to him as the responsible and best informed person. If the arguments of my critics were justified, then an active Foreign Minister should never make a speech, write an article or address the public in any way at all. In coming years, perhaps – the exact moment will depend on general international developments – we shall be faced with the momentous question of whether to continue to give our assent to the burdens imposed on us in the draft of the State treaty of 1949, in order to bring about the evacuation of the country.

I have always considered it my duty, and still do, to make clear to the Austrian people our political situation and the events that led to it. No official publication would have achieved this aim and given, either to Parliament or the general public, an accurate picture, if for no other reason than that it would not have reached a sufficiently wide circle of readers. Furthermore, its polemics must be more guarded than a private work.

Finally, I would like to emphasise once again that it was far from being my intention to hurt anyone, least of all a man such as Chancellor Figl, with whom I have worked for years. When extracts from a book are published in the press the character of the book is frequently distorted. If this applied in my case and the public was given a false impression, then the fault is not mine as I had no influence on the choice of extracts or on their textual adaptation. But as far as the world outside Austria is concerned, then the value of a protest against our present circumstances cannot be estimated highly enough.

What is essential is to affirm that there must be no doubt of our policy of cultural and intellectual adherence to the West, as well as to the policy of defence against Communism. But there must be equally little doubt that on occasion the tactical aims of the Western powers can conflict with our own interests and that it is not possible for us to renounce the pursuit of an individual policy for Austria.

Vienna, November



## PREFACE

This is the age of high-level international conferences. No sooner has one conference ended or bogged down in disagreement than another one appears to be in the making. The Soviet Union is the prime mover in diplomacy by conference and it has certainly used each occasion to reap a maximum of propaganda benefit. In each instance the Soviet Union emphasises its desire to ease international tension. If the Soviet Government are sincerely interested in an international *détente* – and I do not believe that war would be in their interest – they are driving a hard bargain and want to obtain results at the lowest possible price. Austria is a case in point. Post-war events have shown that the Soviets cannot hope to incorporate Austria into the Eastern bloc. They know that one day they will have to give up their hold on Eastern Austria and they would not want to do anything that might seriously upset the balance in Central Europe. Yet for eight years they have tried to squeeze concession after concession from the West to reduce the price that they know they will sooner or later have to pay for peace in Europe.

These general Russian tactics are confirmed in the results of almost every conference. Despite its recovery from the difficulties caused by the war, the Western world has nowhere yet offered that picture of consolidated strength that might perhaps have made the Soviet rulers realise that a *détente* demanded a higher price.

Austria suggested repeatedly that attention be concentrated on one issue only and not dispersed over every subject under the sun – at least until one question was satisfactorily solved. But the fact is that the interests of the great powers are world-wide and they frequently express the wish that the conference agenda include items that are more closely connected with their own interests than is, for example, Austria. Even so, one is justified in saying that a policy of which the declared intention would be to treat Austria as a test case, and thereby ascertain beyond all doubt the aims of Soviet policy, would not only conform to the Austrian point of view but would also benefit the interests of the Western powers.

The real readiness of Soviet policy to negotiate can only be discovered from concrete events and not from vague indications

Given precise assurances of which the value often enough proved deceptive. Various episodes in Austrian post-war history show that the Russians not infrequently indicated the existence of definite possibilities or even gave clear and precise assurances that our difficulties were now at an end. But for all that, the introduction of new decrees, vague discussions or simply a refusal to fulfil what had been promised, made these assurances worthless.

The Berlin Conference at the beginning of 1954 is the most outstanding international event to take place since this book was written. This time the Western powers were politically well prepared for a discussion on Austria. Their readiness to recognise the state treaty *tel quel* and to complete those articles, which had been left open, on the basis of Russian proposals, was undoubtedly good tactics and showed that the West understood that Austrian political freedom was worth many an economic sacrifice. It was calculated to destroy once and for all the legend that the Western powers had secret reservations and were in reality not prepared to sign the treaty. The Soviet Union was obviously taken completely by surprise: it completely deprived of any value its readiness to resume negotiations and thus clear itself from the accusation of sabotaging the treaty. Against their principles the Soviets were forced publicly and crudely to reveal their lack of willingness to evacuate Austria, so long as they did not receive corresponding compensation elsewhere, especially in the German question.

In his opening speech of 25th January 1954 Molotov said he 'could not help recognising... the inadmissibility of further postponement of matters relating to the settlement of relations between the Great Powers, without which it is impossible to ensure the solution of many international problems and to contribute successfully to a further relaxation of international tension... The consolidation of peace in Europe,' he continued, 'and the need to assure the national rights of the Austrian people demand the earliest re-establishment of a free and independent Austria and the settlement of the Austrian question...'

But a few weeks later on 13th February, by which time the tactical phase of the conference was over, Molotov changed his tune and suggested that 'the governments of the four powers



## PREFACE

agree . . . in order to prevent any attempt at a new Anschluss, to postpone, pending the conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany, the withdrawal of the troops of the Four Powers stationed in the territory of the respective zones of Austria. . . .’

The only comment of Foster Dulles, the American Secretary of State, was: ‘. . . I can only say, my first reaction is of a very cold chill. . . .’ And the Austrian Foreign Minister, Dr Figl, felt obliged to declare: ‘. . . by “freedom” Austria means above all the end of the occupation. . . . What can one think of a state treaty which puts heavy burdens on the Austrian people but at the same time withholds from them the decisive advantage, namely, the withdrawal of foreign troops?’ But to try and bridge over the gap, the Foreign Minister stated that ‘. . . although we cannot accept the arguments put forward by Mr Molotov in support of his proposal, my Government . . . has nevertheless made it clear that it would be willing . . . to accept an extension of the time limit within which the occupation troops . . . must quit Austrian soil. However,’ he continued, ‘. . . the final date must not be made dependent on circumstances which are hypothetical and over which Austria has no influence, but must be tied to a definite date. . . . I therefore propose in the name of the Austrian Federal Government that the period of ninety days envisaged in Article 33 be prolonged so that the latest date for the complete withdrawal of foreign troops may be fixed at 30th June 1955. . . .’

Molotov refused to budge and his last proposal—‘that the discussions on the Austrian state treaty be continued through diplomatic channels in Vienna with the participation of the Austrian government’—was only a feeble attempt to disguise the attitude of complete negation which the Soviet proposals expressed so unambiguously.

As so often before, those responsible for Soviet foreign policy very soon came to realise that in the eyes of world public opinion they had put themselves in an impossible position *vis-à-vis* Austria. Attempts were soon made to tone down the impression left by the Berlin Conference. Not least, the extremely sharp reaction of the Austrian population which could not fail to give Moscow cause for concern. It even led to open threats by the Soviet Ambassador

against the Austrian government. But the Chancellor's public and dignified rejection of this attempt at intimidation prepared the way for the easing of this renewed tension; and soon the Soviets gave us to understand that they were interested in a resumption of negotiations on Austria, at the same time hinting vaguely at different compromise solutions to the everlasting occupation problem.

In these exchanges, the Austrian government had to bear two important tasks in mind: on the one hand, to hold fast to its policy of unconditional evacuation, and, on the other, not to assume responsibility for the fact that the negotiations suggested were not even begun. The government took account of these principles in a note to Moscow which, without rejecting the idea of a new conference, left to the great powers the responsibility of preparing the ground for a successful conference by making the appropriate calculations of policy.

declarations of notes made at least one thing clear - today

This can no longer afford simply to oppose Austrian wishes. Moscow comes possible, therefore, to win over the Western powers. If it becomes an 'Austrian first' policy, then this will certainly not be to support influence on future Russian decisions. If Russia begins to without international *détente* with growing urgency, then it will seek an agreed through an Austrian settlement, of which she has been so chary. Thus one of the main tasks of a constructive hitherto towards Austria by the great powers seems to be to make policy to the Soviets that further conferences are meaningless if it clear evacuation of Austria does not give concrete expression to the the are for peace; and such a policy would run parallel to the interests of all the powers concerned in the free world.

This book tries to put Austria's case before the world - its development in public as well as some hitherto unpublished facts - in illustration of Soviet attempts to obtain benefits in return for no, or very little, payment. It also tries to show something of the Western attempts, now successful and now unsuccessful, at countering that policy. If the Austrian example sheds new light on the general picture of East-West relationships, then this study will have served its purpose.

## Chapter One

★

# Austria Occupied – by the Wrong Army

It was on 3rd May 1945, at eight o'clock in the evening, that the first American troops, coming from Germany, entered Innsbruck. The red white-red flag of Austria flew from every house and an enormous throng greeted the car of Major Sheldon D. Elliot, the first American officer to come into contact with civilian Austria. Half Innsbruck crowded the streets as Elliot was jubilantly escorted to the seat of the government of the province – the Tyrol *Landhaus*. A huge American flag was unfurled when he entered.

What had happened? What was the reason for the difference between this reception and the grim, silent localities through which the same troops had just made a fighting advance?

The Tyrol branch of the Austrian resistance movement, which had existed ever since Hitler's invasion of Austria in 1938, had become more and more active from 1942 onwards. It had taken up arms a few days before the entry of the Americans and seized power in the province, which was then assumed to be the future scene of a last-ditch Nazi defence. Hence, even though German organisation and morale had both become very shaky in the closing weeks of the war, those s s units which had been kept in reserve could not but give the resistance movement cause for concern.

But in our own area we had completely succeeded in restoring order. The executive committee in the *Landhaus* was calm and self-possessed as it prepared an appropriate reception for the American liaison officer. 'Who are you?' he asked me. 'I am the chief of the resistance movement,' was my answer. And with that there began a new chapter in the history of the Tyrol.

Our information officer now drew up a report for the population of the events of the last few days, to which the entry of American troops was the happy climax. For lack of any other organ, his report appeared in a newspaper that carried Nazi articles on its back page. This was a unique publication for it was for long the one and only

On the very day it appeared, it was banned by the Division for Psychological Warfare. Weeks passed before this heavy-handed censorship was removed and the press again permitted to function freely.

But in those early days we knew nothing of such regulations. After week-long exertions, I fell dead-beat on my bed. It was the evening of my thirty-sixth birthday – liberation from Nazi dictatorship was the finest present I could have wished for.

All was still far from quiet. In my sleep I could hear the rumbling of heavy vehicles and when I awoke I saw with astonishment the enormous quantity of material with which the American divisions were rolling through Innsbruck: gigantic Sherman tanks, road-building machinery, heavy and super-heavy lorries, artillery of every calibre, with an unending chain of jeeps threading their way in between the larger vehicles. Where did this army keep its infantrymen, I wondered? All of a sudden we were alarmed by a loud banging on the door. And then they entered, the Texas boys of the 'Cactus Division', on their rubber soles as noiseless as Red Indians. They assumed that we would know no English and prowled silently through the kitchen, bedrooms, living-rooms, everywhere on the look-out for arms and pistols. Finally they declared that the house must be cleared and all its inhabitants moved to the first floor – which did not make me at all enthusiastic. But my wife, with her excellent knowledge of English, explained to the Texans who we were. The lads then showed sufficient understanding to realise that their order would indeed be very wrong. In the end we arranged for five of the Texans to be billeted on us but in return we were allowed to continue to occupy our bedroom – although this was of course against the regulations.

For a few days the soldiers and one sergeant stayed with us. We were all on the best of terms and they did everything they could to improve our rations. All I had to do was to promise each of them a German pistol to take home as a souvenir. Later, Major Elliot put our house out of bounds and this protected us from all further molestation.

On the following morning I went early to the *Landhaus* to begin my public activity in liberated Austria. This consisted at first of

...of worries, disappointments and difficulties. This began with the last session of the Military Executive Committee which was at the same time the first civil session of that Committee for Public Order of the Tyrol. It was a delicate situation but we were all reasonable enough to see that our first job was to keep alive and that democracy could not be taken out of a tin that had spent the last decade in a refrigerator, so to speak. It did not take long to settle a dispute on the conduct of future business: our prime task, we decided, was to put forward our views on the new régime to the American military authorities.

We enjoyed a certain standing, not only because of our resistance activities but also because the Tyrol was one of the few areas where a revolutionary governmental authority was functioning even before the entry of Allied troops. A talk with Major Elliot, who represented, as far as we were concerned, the American Army, led to some practical results. At first he pulled out his regulations and tried to tell us which organs of administration we had to establish in order to fit in with the structure of American Military Government. But this was in itself quite out of step with Austrian tradition. Not until later did we discover that Elliot only had the authority to establish an administration at 'district level'. They made no allowance for a provincial government, a higher administrative organ.

But despite all these difficulties our contact with Elliot was fruitful and without friction. He was a man of culture who was not so much guided by military regulations as by the desire to see a reborn Austria. He went to considerable trouble to remove an otherwise unavoidable antagonism.

Elliot knew only a little German but spoke an English that we could easily understand. I summoned up all my knowledge of English to take a direct part in the discussions, for without an adequate linguistic equipment it was hardly possible to conceive of smooth co-operation with the military authorities. It was demonstrated again and again that the interpreters exercised unprecedented influence where the occupation authorities knew no German and our people no English. Moreover, the interpreters themselves were not always free from objection. Sometimes they

were even former Nazis or D.P.'s who caused the local population much unnecessary trouble and often enough were detested.

Generally speaking, our work gave us more trouble than satisfaction. At first there was such unpleasant friction between the population and the troops that I had to make a radio appeal to the public, asking them to understand the position of the troops who simply had to be found billets. When the war ended, the rigours of the occupation would be quickly diminished and a period of relaxation would follow.

This broadcast was unfortunately the last for a long time: for on the following day a lieutenant from the Division for Psychological Warfare closed down the radio station which, he said, could not be operated without censorship. Simultaneously the *Tiroler Nachrichten*—the Tyrol News—was also closed down, thus depriving us of any possibility of keeping the population informed. The last thing the 'Psychological Branch' understood seemed to be psychology.

In the meantime, a fantastic hubbub had developed in the Tyrol *Landhaus*. Were we not the sole Austrian authority in town and country? Every day hundreds of people approached the members of the Executive Committee with requests. There were people hunting for jobs; there were those with jobs to hang on to; those who complained of real or alleged excesses by the troops; business people complaining because liberated D.P.'s had looted their shops; and hundreds of hangers-on who simply thought it a good idea to be close to the new centre of power so that they might be carried high on the wave of revolutionary upheaval.

The American 'open door' habit made our work even more difficult. Every soldier, from a colonel to a sergeant, came to see me. They generally turned up in small units, armed to the teeth, with a machine-gun under their arm: 'Are you Mr Gruber?' 'Yes, I am.' 'We need at once . . .' and then followed a list of the endless wants of their military and administrative offices. What does an army's civilian existence not require? Bitumen for road repairs, steam-rollers, railway waggons, scythes and sickles to level its playing-fields, lawn-mowers, tennis balls, saxophones and other wind instruments, pots of paint, window-panes, bed-clothes,

standard lamps, and over and over again 'German pistols' - the war's favourite souvenir.

We did all we could to help, were in constant touch by special messenger with the command posts and daily fought our way through a mountain of difficulties. From eight o'clock in the morning until late at night we had more problems than time in which to cope with them. But slowly and with difficulty we managed to build up an organisation which we prevailed on the Americans to accept.

We soon learned that one of the reasons for our many difficulties was the fact that we had been occupied by the wrong army. One day a captain explained to us: 'All this trouble is Patton's fault.' If the plans of invasion headquarters had been followed, we would have been occupied from the south by General Clark's Fifth Army. As things turned out, however, General Patton's advance had pushed the Seventh Army further southwards; in addition, the intervention of the resistance movement had obliged part of the Tenth Corps to march into the Tyrol.

The Military Government officers who now began to operate in Innsbruck were excellently equipped for Stuttgart. But that was the very place they never arrived in because Stuttgart, for one reason or another, was occupied by the French. There they knew population totals with as much accuracy as they knew the strength of the police force, the consumption of gas and the sites of the most important buildings. Where Innsbruck was concerned, many hardly even knew that it was situated in Austria. What was more, the only instructions they had with them referred to Germany, and these required us to be treated with the greatest caution and banned all fraternisation. It was only gradually that we succeeded in asserting something like an Austrian policy at the lower levels when, weeks later, officers of the Fifth Army arrived from Caserta.

The fact that the American administration was anything but friendly to the resistance movement created added difficulties. The reason for this was not only their defective knowledge of its historical background and local circumstances but just as much the general attitude of the Western Allies. In Jugoslavia the resistance movement had led directly to Communist domination of the

...; in Greece, only the intervention of British troops averted this danger; in Belgium, events even made it necessary to disarm the resistance. Almost everywhere it had shown itself an obstacle to the political plans of the Western Allies. In Austria, in itself a difficult enough problem, Allied headquarters had so much the less desire to allow the movement any special role. Politically, the Western Allies' aim was to take over immediately the administration themselves, and then, after thorough denazification, gradually to build up from the bottom democratic organs of administration. This policy, however, conflicted with the needs of orderly government and was bound to provoke the unfavourable reaction of the population.

The military commanders were soon trying to get free from their rigid instructions. The result was a compromise between paper plans and sound common sense. Even so, the resistance movement remained a thorn in the side of the Americans. When the actual change of power took place we had given official status in each district to the local commanders, without much discrimination, or, where these were non-existent, to the first person to proclaim himself an envoy of the resistance movement. Not surprisingly, this summary procedure enabled unreliable elements to worm their way in.

This motley picture on the Austrian side was matched by no less a degree of confusion on the Allies' side. Every ten kilometres a different military government was in command, one would only take orders from Munich, another only from Kitzbuhel, a third only from Innsbruck. The commanders of the American troops formed a second line of authority and did not bother in the slightest about the orders of Military Government. There was at first only the faintest sign of co-ordination between them. The country was divided into regions and our Security Committee, which was no more than tolerated, was only a feeble obstacle.

The Austrian side also suffered from a conflict of authority. We had full power in the area covered by our uprising—i.e. from Landeck to Jenbach, but the French had marched into part of the Landeck region and lowered an iron curtain between the two military zones. We were as good as cut off from Reutte. Eastwards





~~SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES~~

...the realm of a master builder who had formed his own resistance movement. Kitzbühel also had its own private government, controlled by an iron merchant.

We only knew from hearsay what was happening in the rest of Austria. The Americans had also made the mistake of opening without delay all prison and internee camps. The liberated Russians, Ukrainians, Poles—who could put a name to all the nationalities?—began to loot shops and peasant households. The Americans hardly bothered. We ourselves always had to keep on at the troop commanders in order at least to safeguard food supplies.

The secret services were a chapter to themselves: the CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps), the WCO (War Criminal Organisation) and the OSS (Office of Strategic Services). Each of these organisations began to make arrests. Unfortunately it was not always Nazi bosses who were seized but frequently quite innocent people on whose behalf we afterwards had to intervene. Another example of misplaced zeal took place on the afternoon of 6th May when the Town Commandant of Innsbruck declared the municipal police prisoners-of-war because they were still wearing the grey-green uniform of the *Wehrmacht*. The result was the collapse of the civilian security system. At two o'clock I raced to the Town Commandant and successfully implored him to release the police. But the American system required me to give a personal guarantee for each man. Accompanied by a liaison officer we therefore hurried to the court of the old University where three hundred policemen were assembled. I told them they were released but added that the American command would not allow them to carry out their duties wearing *Wehrmacht* uniform: they might otherwise be constantly confused with dispersed German units. I asked them to return home and for the time being to function in mufti, wearing an arm-band. Each thereupon received a white arm-band bearing on it the black letters: MG police—Military Government police.

Questionnaires from the CIC rained down on us without stop. The word 'questionnaire' itself was soon familiar to every shepherd's boy in the Tyrol. I myself must have filled in at least a dozen. Usually they went astray, and a new official always demanded a



new questionnaire - about income, career from the cradle to the grave, and possible membership of all kinds of organisations, both before and after the Anschluss. There were sixty-five short and sweet, detailed questions. There were no special questionnaires to fit Austrian circumstances so that it was meaningless for us to be asked: what did you earn before 1933? Wearisome disputes were the only result. One day a CIC officer asked me to write out a short sketch of recent Austrian history. This ten-page compendium, in a handy English translation, was then pressed into the hands of every Security Officer. One of them was so impressed that he wanted to send it without further ado to the American Historical Association.

At the end of May 1945, a more settled American authority took over when Lieutenant-Colonel Watts arrived with his staff from Rome. His job was to build up the administration at provincial level, which meant that he became military governor of the Tyrol Province. Major G, his predecessor and a real soldier, was very anxious for the next senior officer to find everything in order. So there was much inspection and cleaning of offices. But nothing was ever shiny enough for him. Our new ruler should never speak ill of Austria because of the dust.

Colonel Gordon J. Watts was a man of about forty from South Carolina. Hitherto he had been in charge of the agricultural department of Military Government in Rome. Our first meeting was correct but not exactly cordial. His staff worked at an impressive rate. In a few hours some twenty-five officers had settled down in their administrative buildings, together with their card-indexes, reference material, telephone exchange, 'in-trays' and 'out-trays', each officer with his own sphere of responsibility clearly defined. On that same day they sat down to discuss our problems. At last a more fruitful co-operation between Military Government and the government of the province was to develop.

Naturally, our first concern was food supply. Stocktaking between 5th and 10th May showed that there were only small supplies of grain and fat available in the Tyrol and that even these had for the most part been looted. The German authorities seemed to have located all their large provision dumps outside Austria.

Upper Tyrol was reported to hold reserve stocks for the Tyrol, Salzburg and Vorarlberg. From the first, we had wisely insisted that the peasants continue to make their deliveries on the same scale as before. Lettuce and early vegetables also helped to improve the food situation. The town population could procure additional food from the country. If the Germans had collapsed in late autumn we would have been faced with a real catastrophe.

We had to procure our grain supplies from headquarters in Frankfurt and by the beginning of June the worst of our food difficulties were over. By the time the American troops withdrew from the Tyrol the population was receiving sufficient rations, particularly of first-class white bread.

In spite of our good co-operation there was something odd about the way in which the Americans allocated their functions. A Senior lieutenant, for example, was in charge of transport as well as 'art and monuments'. The reason for this surprising conjunction of offices was that in private life this reserve officer was a draughtsman in a bicycle factory—bicycles, therefore transport; draughtsman, therefore arts and monuments!

The Chief of Public Safety, Major Ch—, seemed to us at first rather inaccessible. He would walk dreamily round the building looking for any door through which unsupervised civilians might penetrate to American Military Government. Then he plunged with burning zeal into the work of denazification. He replied to all our objections by taking the regulations out of his desk and pointing with a long index finger to the words: 'mandatory removal'. The reasons for 'mandatory removal' were unhappily as numerous as they were illogical. Officials with the rank of *Regierungsrat* aroused his especial suspicion. In the Tyrol, fortunately, things were never as bad as in Upper Austria where overnight they were almost all taken into custody. But anyone who had belonged to more than four Nazi organisations also fell a victim to 'mandatory removal'. Membership of the German Labour Front, the Nazi Welfare Services, the Reich Colonial League, the League of Nazi Lawyers, and even of the Students' Association led to condemnation. Those familiar with the background were aware that it was often the very people under heavy political pressure

who had joined these organisations in order not to have to join the Nazi Party. We never abandoned the struggle for the treatment of individuals as individuals and were constantly bombarding people in authority with our memoranda. Finally, even here, reason more and more came to replace paper regulations.

Refugees and forced labourers gave us no little trouble. Under the name of 'Displaced Persons' we soon learned to know their special importance. In the first few months the Tyrol was hardly aware of the problem of expelled Germans. Not until late summer did those from the Sudetenland and Hungary begin to stream into the province.

Despite every difficulty and obstacle, we had overcome the worst in eight weeks and were looking forward to the return of orderly administration. This was the very moment when an unexpected event jeopardised everything we had achieved hitherto—at the beginning of July the Americans occupying the Tyrol were replaced by the French. There had of course been repeated rumours of an imminent change in the occupation authorities but even well-informed Americans considered them unfounded. And now the French were there! That is to say, not the French army exactly but a small advance guard, led by a senior lieutenant who was to take over the administration from the Americans.

What a difference! An almost exaggerated precision was transformed into nonchalance. Politically, it involved many advantages. The French intervened far less in trivialities than did the law-abiding Americans. As against this, the organisation of food supplies became much worse, or, to be more precise, hardly existed at all. In a country that is completely devoid of resources, a change in occupation comes perilously near to a disaster in food supplies. Actually, things never quite reached that stage, but we had difficult weeks ahead of us before a new system was devised.

Step by step the French took over. A major prepared the entry of the colonel, the colonel the entry of the divisional general, and the general the entry of the French general in command. This procedure had the advantage of leaving us our own masters in our own country for at least three weeks. Far and wide there was no trace at all of any kind of French military administration. The first French

The French guard took over from Colonel Watts the latter's files. The conscientious American then delivered a four-hour lecture on the Austrian situation, before pressing into the Frenchman's hands a detailed statement of the essential measures to safeguard both present and future food supplies. The good French colonel wiped his brow. '*Épouvantable!*' was his only comment.

Colonel Watts and his staff of two dozen officers packed their bags and in a few hours the whole of the American occupation of the Tyrol was dissolved. Although in the first few weeks the French officers could be counted on the fingers of one hand, they had soon multiplied considerably. Where Colonel Watts had managed with twenty-five, we could now count several hundred.

These French officers were obviously obsessed by the idea that '*mauvaise volonté*'—ill will—dogged their every footstep. They smelt it everywhere. If information was not detailed enough, if a hole was dug in front of a colonel's house, if the rolls on Sundays were not fresh or if no meat was available, they put it down to *mauvaise volonté* or, as the more cultured of them expressed it, to the spirit of Andreas Hofer.<sup>1</sup> This state of mind could be explained to some extent perhaps by the not particularly kind treatment they received from the other allies, and also perhaps by the history of the Tyrol, which in 1809 was one of the first regions in Europe to drive out Napoleon's generals. In Paris the Tyroleans had the reputation of being enemies of the French, refractory and rebellious. But we even finally got used to our reputation.

It was less easy to get used to the growing difficulties in the supply of flour and fats. At first the French administration did not bother itself at all with such prosaic matters. Perhaps they themselves had no reserves to fill the gaps. Apparently the American authorities in Frankfurt, who had of course the key to the flour depots, were not very helpful, so it looked as though we would have to pay the bill for these differences of opinions. Once again I had to rush in my car, inevitably held up at the many road blocks, to the American Regional Command in Salzburg to insist upon

<sup>1</sup> Andreas Hofer, a Tyrolean patriot who in 1809 led the popular resistance against the Napoleonic troops occupying the province. He was shot in Mantua in 1810. (See p. 26, Translator's note.)

allocations of flour and fats. Luckily, we found friends there and the matter was settled satisfactorily.

Unfortunately, the relationship between the population and the French troops began to worsen. Severe requisitioning was the order of the day. Stocks were simply seized, without even the asking of permission, and everything possible was claimed as German property. There was bitterness in the countryside when fifteen hundred draught horses which had been distributed free by the American army were seized back from the peasants. Eventually, in order to secure an improvement in conditions, we had to threaten to resign. When an outstanding administrator, Pierre Voizard, Prefect of the Department of Seine-et-Oise, was appointed Governor-General, he invited us to establish a complaints office. Here all cases of friction were brought together and by eleven o'clock every day laid on the desks of the French military government officials in the form of petitions.

The French staff in the meantime was occupied with arrangements for their general's triumphal entry into the Tyrol. The regulations dealing with this event were at least three pages long and contained more items than there are gold stars on a general's uniform. The staff's desire that flags should alternate every hundred yards with oriflammes in the decoration of the processional route gave us many a headache. Unskilled translators suggested we set up great copper cauldrons spouting flames. The more astute found out that an oriflamme is nothing more than a flag hung horizontally. In the ceremonial hall of the Emperor's castle in Innsbruck dress-rehearsals were held regularly. Colonel C—, a Gascon, an extremely pleasant man and uncommonly well-versed in matters of protocol, studied every detail of the reception. The ceremony was gone through from every conceivable angle and everything carefully noted down. Then he was suddenly taken aback: national anthems. Our orchestra could certainly play the *Marseillaise*, but what of the Austrian national anthem? The old one had the same tune as the *Deutschland Lied*.<sup>1</sup> Colonel C— shook his head vigorously. 'Impossible!' He suggested the Tyrol anthem. But this was the *Andreas Hofer March*, composed when the French shot the Tyrol

<sup>1</sup> Otherwise known as *Deutschland Über Alles*. (Translator's note.)

...MANTUA OCCUPIED BY THE FRENCH AND  
national hero in Mantua in 1810. The Colonel thought deeply for  
a moment. He decided that the risk was too great and, if I remember  
rightly, we agreed on Beethoven's *Egmont* overture. In the end  
the great ceremony passed off without incident.

All this was not exactly to the taste of the reserved Tyrolean  
character. But what the French lost through these bombastic cere-  
monies, they made good by their charm, political understanding  
and ever-present hospitality.

## *Chapter Two*

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### **The Parties Revive—but Unity Preserved**

Despite the never-ending struggle merely to keep body and soul together, Austria began to revive politically as the traditional parties re-established themselves. The Communists were the first to emerge. They wasted no time in requisitioning a headquarters that was soon decked out in flamboyant anti-fascist slogans. The Socialists were also quick off the mark in building up their party and, even faster, their trade union apparatus.

Party formation on the right wing proceeded more slowly. The Peasant Union and Christian Trade Unions were of course soon in full swing, but not for a long time was there to be any thought of consolidating conservative forces. Eight years had passed since the forcible dissolution of the old Christian-Social Party and any new conservative, middle-class party must therefore find a new programme, and call on new people to lead it—or else a split was inevitable.

In the meantime the isolation of the Tyrol gradually loosened up. The 'kingdom' became once again a federal province. The American authorities informed us that negotiations were in progress to determine the final zonal boundaries. At the same time news from Vienna began to flow more freely. It was anything but reassuring; we heard, for example, that the Red Army had helped the Communists to take over a number of key positions in the Government. Franz Honner, the commander of a Communist partisan battalion, was appointed Secretary of State for the Interior.

Opinions in Western Austria were deeply divided as to what should be done to counter events in Vienna. Some people said an opposition government must be formed at once with a mandate to resist any intervention by Vienna. Was this view justified and patriotic? Whether Austria would remain united or be split up into two parts was not of course to be decided for some time yet. But the first step on the road to the dissolution of the country must



no case come from the Western provinces. We felt our task to be the forceful liberation of the Vienna government from Communist fetters. This demanded as its first pre-condition the political unity of the Western provinces. Of these the Tyrol was considered by far the most advanced from the angle of efficient administration. The initiative fell to us; and we issued an appeal urging everyone interested to attend a conference in Salzburg.

The conference, attended by delegates from all the Western provinces, opened on 20th August and eventually gave birth to an organisation that was destined to have a decisive influence on the future course of Austria's revival. The debates were animated and produced bitter criticism of the denazification programme, the absence of freedom of movement for Austrian citizens, the squandering of goods of all kinds and the lack of co-operation between the military governors. The Americans, British and French were made aware for the first time of the population's reaction to their administration. The necessary deductions were drawn and the conference led to a gradual improvement in the conditions of all the Western occupation zones.

The conference's second achievement was an appeal to the great powers to extend without delay the UNRRA programme to Austria. Observers from the Office of Strategic Services saw to it that in America our appeal received the greatest emphasis. A few weeks later we were gratified to see the first practical steps being taken in this direction.

But the most important result of the Salzburg conference was to make the Western powers familiar with our problems and win them over to support a forward-looking policy. This was particularly necessary for the Americans, who had hitherto preserved a passive attitude towards our internal political problems.

We were also successful in formulating a common policy to be pursued by all the Western provinces in regard to the Renner government in Vienna. It was decided to enter into contact with the latter but also to demand that it be enlarged by the inclusion of trusted representatives from Western Austria. At the same time we hoped to weaken Communist efforts to seize hold of the government.

Dr Renner, in the meantime, had issued invitations to the first conference of provinces, to be held in Vienna on 20th September. The Western provinces decided to hold a preparatory meeting in Salzburg, which met on 18th September to determine their tactics. Even the Russian Zone sent delegates.

We were soon in agreement on the formation of a united People's Party, with its own name and programme. The main differences of opinion centred on the formation of the Government. The representatives of Eastern Austria had come in the hope of checking radical measures in the provinces. Dr Renner only wanted a very slight reshuffle of the Government, it was said. But the People's Party was aiming at fresh elections.

We in the West doubted whether free elections were possible in the Russian Zone. But this point had of course to be left to the Viennese themselves who knew the state of affairs better than we did. It was also they who would have to bear the consequences of any ill-advised decision. But whether there were elections or not, the essential need was for a radical reshuffle inside the Government, for without this new elections were inconceivable. The encouragement needed by the supporters of the moderate parties could only come from a frontal assault on the Communists, and this we were intent on making.

Our preparatory conference was unanimous on the tactics we should employ: in the new government, equilibrium must prevail between the People's Party and the left-wing parties. Its new members should be nominated by the Western provinces, who should also occupy two Ministries. Specifically, a minimum programme was adopted: the dismissal of the Communist Minister of the Interior, the formation of a new Ministry for the security of property, and the reactivation of the Foreign Office.

Our friends warned us to expect serious trouble. As the main Western spokesman, I was entrusted with the task of putting forward the Salzburg programme with all the vigour necessary. We prepared to leave on 24th September but the rain was coming down in torrents and the aeroplane placed at our disposal by the Americans could not take off. After waiting for a few hours we

...left—in a convoy of twenty vehicles—for Vienna where, after many incidents, we arrived late at night.

In view of our late arrival the conference had been postponed and did not open till the following day. Three commissions were elected—political, legal and economic. Dr Renner himself took the chair in the political commission. He opened our discussions with a speech from which it was easy to see that the minimum of changes had been agreed upon with the Communists. We were firmly determined to make a breach in this policy.

I wanted to bring up the political problem in its entirety. 'The present Government in no way represents the will of the people,' I declared. 'The Communists are represented to an extent that far exceeds their importance. This must be fundamentally changed if the Western provinces are to discuss their participation in the government. If elections are decided on for the near future, then any undemocratic influences must be eliminated.'

The Communists, as I had expected, brought up their heavy guns to reply. The opening volley was fired by Dr Ernst Fischer, the Secretary of State for Education and Information. He was followed by Johann Koplenig, deputy Chancellor, and Franz Honner. The latter's speech was a barely veiled threat to bring to an end the era of peace in the streets and factories. His idea was to make the conference hall resound with the thunderous tread of marching workers. Fischer, the first Communist speaker, tried to prove that in the last twelve years vast changes had taken place in Austrian public opinion, making the Communists into a mass party. They had undergone an inner transformation and changed from a radical, opposition party into a constructive organisation, fully willing to play its part in the building up of the State.

But the most significant Communist argument was that the Soviet Union would not accept any far-reaching changes in the Government.

By midday the clash of the first pro's and con's had died away. After an interval, discussions were resumed at three o'clock. When I reflected on the morning's debate as a whole, I saw that the impact by my aggressive speech had faded. The Communist intervention had given new life to the formula of 'no change'.

I mounted a second attack. 'If there is no change of substance in the Government, then this conference is a failure,' I declared. 'In no circumstances will we agree to a one-party rule.' But the situation remained critical, and I spoke again. 'We have been brought to Vienna under false pretences,' I said. 'What we have here are not negotiations between equal partners. The conference has failed and the time for the final session must be fixed. We will record a minority vote and then leave.'

This declaration was so sharp that it was followed by several minutes of complete silence. Then Dr Koref, the Mayor of Linz, spoke, in order, as he put it, to prevent the breakdown of the conference by putting forward some compromise proposals—the appointment of an Under-Secretary of State for the Interior to supervise elections, the establishment of a special public security commission, and the appointment of an Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Westerners were to occupy all these posts.

After some debate, we all expressed our agreement with these proposals. We were content with what we had achieved. The moderate centre had shown its strength and the Communist spell was broken.

On the following day all the delegates met in the assembly room of the Lower Austrian provincial parliament for a solemn final session. Chancellor Renner delivered one of his masterly speeches, impregnated with the full significance of the moment. It was greeted with thunderous applause. The conference came to an end in an atmosphere of great relief. Four-power recognition of the Austrian Government was now assured, and followed a few weeks later by decision of the Control Council.

On 25th September 1945 I announced my resignation as Governor of the Tyrol in order to take over the direction of Austrian foreign policy.

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November 25th 1945 was a historic day in the life of post-war Austria—it was the date of the first free elections since the 'thirties to determine the country's political fate. Electoral fever gripped the whole population.

in the event, the elections turned into a demonstration against Soviet policy, and electoral speeches struck a more and more violent anti-Russian note. Relations between the Soviet headquarters in the Hotel Imperial and the provisional government became day by day more strained. The fact is that the Communists had given the Soviet command a false impression of the popular mood and it thought a left-wing majority was certain.

For us politicians, the elections meant enormous physical effort and a great deal of nervous tension. Communications were poor and the old worn-out cars we had often enough broke down. The passes were covered with snow, the days were very short and the countryside was unsafe.

Election day itself passed off quietly. And by the early hours of 26th November it was clear that the unexpected had come to pass: the People's Party had won a great victory. With our overall majority of five seats we could have formed the government.<sup>1</sup> But our dangerous international position made this impossible. Besides, it was a time when there was nothing to offer the mass of the population but heavy burdens and few benefits. The need of the hour was a broad coalition. Neither of the two great mass parties could be excluded from responsibility if the reconstruction and security of the State were to be ensured.

There were also historical reasons for this. Between the two world wars a radical working class in Austria had confronted right-wing groups every bit as radical. There had even been bloody clashes between them. Moreover, when Austria began to feel the pressure of Nazi Germany in the 'thirties, this tense internal situation made it impossible any longer to uphold our democratic system. The right-wing won and even though the methods employed by the government of that period were not comparable by any stretch of imagination with those of the Fascist states—in particular, there had never been in Austria any anti-semitism on the

<sup>1</sup> The 165 seats were distributed as follows:

Austrian People's Party	85
Socialists	76
Communists	4

part of the State—understandably bitter memories had remained of that period.

An unusual opportunity to reorganise our political life now emerged. Only co-responsibility could tame the radical wing of the Socialists. In this, beyond all momentary advantages, lay the chance of a permanent internal consolidation of Austria.

Talks on the formation of a government began immediately after the appointment of Leopold Figl as Chancellor. They were difficult enough. It was almost two weeks before there was agreement on the distribution of portfolios. The negotiators spent whole nights running to and fro between friend and enemy.

The final list of ministers was then handed over to the four occupying powers. The Soviet Union at once objected to three of those selected: Julius Raab (Trade), Vinzenz Schumy (Security of Property), and Andreas Korp (Food). These objections were simply absurd for all three, with Russian assent, had been for many months members of the provisional government.

Unfortunately the help we received from the Western powers was not of a kind to impress the Russians. As so often, Western policy in these matters suffered from an internal contradiction. American regulations demanded the elimination of leading members of the 'thirty-eight régime'. During the electoral struggle there had already been a serious crisis in Salzburg when the CIC unhesitatingly began to strike members of the *Heimwehr*<sup>1</sup> off the lists of candidates and even to put some of them under arrest. These measures gave cause for serious concern. By Austrian law National-Socialists were removed from the administration and deprived of the right to vote. If further sections of the population were now to be robbed of their leadership under the heading of 'Austro-Fascism', then a Communist victory was irresistible.

Debates to change this occupation decree went on for days. The disputed passage read: 'Mandatory removal of persons who have been members of the Austro-Fascist administration or have participated in anti-democratic actions.' At our request, John G. Erhardt, the American political adviser and Minister to Austria, finally proposed in Washington that the wording of the decree be

<sup>1</sup> Austrian para-military organisation. (Translator's note.)

The 'or' became 'and', and now the decree only covered people who had demonstrably taken part in undemocratic activities. In practice this solved the problem. We could not of course save the rejected Ministers.

The new government's main task was the fight against hunger. The official allocation per person was eight hundred calories per day, which equals three hundred and fifteen grammes of bread, whereas a worker needs two thousand four hundred calories per day. It is obvious that the worst was only to be avoided with difficulty. In our emergency it was above all generous American aid that enabled us to get over the worst without suffering any fundamental harm. We were also most grateful for a grant of £10 million from Great Britain, though that country too was inadequately fed. What a multitude of different forms this aid took! At first it came from military stock, then UNRRA, post-UNRRA and finally the Marshall Plan. And what an abundance of diplomatic and organisational effort was needed before our co-operation with the Americans found its final form! At first there were also obvious differences in the standard of feeding between one zone and another. Only the American Zone received supplies that were relatively satisfactory. In Lower Austria, the granary of the country, the fighting and the subsequent occupation had seriously affected cultivation. There was also a shortage of agricultural implements, draught-horses and even of manpower and seed corn. Nor were any reserve stocks available. If a ship failed to arrive, either because of natural causes or because of a strike, the results then might have been fatal. Every day we had to intervene, now here, now there, to chase up a few tons of fat or a truckload of flour.

The Foreign Office was constantly kept busy preparing our diplomatic integration into the different aid systems, concluding the relevant treaties, inaugurating special negotiations abroad and with unceasing intervention in the different capitals, especially Washington. The Chancellor and his staff directed our 'plugging the gap' policy by organising deliveries, borrowing from military supplies, and so on. He was indefatigably active in meeting pressure from all sides half-way. But for the first two years of reborn

Austria nothing but bad news and reports of catastrophes reached us.

But we were not misled. Step by step we fought for and reached a state of economic consolidation, although for a long time we were in the position of two frogs who fall into a milk bucket and cannot get out: frog No. 1 gives himself up for lost, stretches out his limbs and dies an unheroic death, but frog No. 2 struggles on, untroubled by the apparent hopelessness of his position. Thus he churns the milk into butter, which forms a ball and with his last ounce of strength he climbs on top of it and springs to freedom.

Apart from co-ordinating the diplomatic aspects of the aid programme, the most urgent task of the Foreign Office was to organise a system of representation abroad and particularly in the capitals of the four occupying powers. How could we work otherwise? It would have been impossible to get any clear picture of the world situation or to give tangible shape to our own foreign policy. Friendly relations cannot be established, treaties prepared or foreign trade developed.

In the first few post-war months the occupying powers felt themselves to hold higher authority than the Austrian Government. Any complaints we made had pretty much the same effect as if we were schoolboys objecting to the reports we received from our teachers. What was indispensable therefore was direct contact with the governments of the occupying powers. I must acknowledge, of course, that a free press assured us a certain independent contact with the outside world by enabling us to reveal abuses and seek out their remedy.

However, in the late autumn of 1946 we sent identical notes to the four powers requesting them to agree to the despatch of Austrian political representatives to their respective countries. Things had got as far as that.

A significant intermezzo accompanied this *démarche*. At first the Soviet Union declared itself ready to resume full diplomatic relations with Austria. This was in complete contrast to the Western countries, who only sent us guarded replies. But by the beginning of 1947 we had established effective diplomatic representation in all of them, though there were at first difficulties in



of Great Britain. Not until 1953 did normal relations exist with the Soviet Union, despite its earlier readiness. There was nothing beyond an exchange of political representatives.

The change in the Russian position coincided with the complete transformation of their tactics. In 1945 it had been their intention to oblige the Austrian Government in direct negotiations to conclude a number of agreements amalgamating our most important economic resources into mixed monopoly companies with fifty per cent Austrian and fifty per cent Russian participation. The origin of this demand was Article IV/9 of the unfortunate Potsdam Agreement, which provided for the transfer of German assets in the Eastern Zone to the Soviet Union.

A Russo-Austrian oil company was to serve as the prototype of this form of economic penetration. Roughly speaking, the Soviet's first suggestion was to form a mixed company in which Austria and Russia would each have a fifty per cent share. But where would our fifty per cent come from? The capital of the company was fixed at \$32 million. The Soviet Union would contribute those oil-fields, valued at \$16 million which it had claimed in the name of 'German assets'. The oil-rights we contributed were valued at \$500,000 and we would therefore have had to contribute an additional \$15½ million to the company's working capital. The company's president was to be Austrian and its managing director Russian. It would enjoy exclusive exploitation rights for the whole of Austria. But we would be responsible for compensation to other (i.e. Western) oil companies.

Negotiations had already begun before my entry into the provisional government and the framework of the agreement was ready. After the four-power occupation of Vienna and the re-formation of the Government on 24th September 1945, the completion of the agreement was naturally out of the question. Negotiations failed when we demanded that a clause be inserted stipulating that any eventual back-claims by Western oil interests were to be borne by the company and not by the Austrian Government.

I vividly remember the day when these oil talks were finally broken off. The Communists were highly excited and said it was an

unprecedented provocation of the great Soviet Union. This, by the way, always turned up when we showed any independent initiative. The Communists would obviously only think in terms of submission. It made no difference whether it was the party or a foreign power that was involved.

From this point on, the Soviet Union defended the view that full sovereignty was the prerogative of the Allied Council alone and of the Austrian Government not at all. There was no more talk of diplomatic but at best of political representatives, which only involved *de facto* recognition and not *de jure*, as the first would have done.

## *Chapter Three*

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# Between East and West: Forebodings in Prague

Although post-war Czechoslovakia saw the restoration of a democratic system of government, the Communists occupied so many key-positions that it was doubtful whether the new Prague régime could last. But could we ever be justified in encouraging a development of this kind by holding ourselves aloof? That is why we thought it important to use the opportunity of trade talks with Czechoslovakia as a means of making personal contact with the country's political leaders. Prague was in fact the first, and for a long time, the only capital where we had established a form of diplomatic representation: the office of the Austrian plenipotentiary.

One winter's morning, the 11th December 1945, almost three months after my appointment to the post of Austrian Foreign Minister, I left for Prague, accompanied by my principal private secretary and a hard-boiled official chauffeur whose only wish was for a quiet life. A small, very old German car was put at our disposal for the journey. When we had managed to stow away our luggage, there was not an inch to spare between the bags and ourselves. As nothing at all was available in the shops, we had to take with us everything we needed for the journey. Our route led us over the heights of Iglau to Kolin. After passing Iglau we ran into a never-ending stream of transport belonging to a Soviet division evacuating Czechoslovakia. An icy wind drove huge snow-drifts over the columns of vehicles. Again and again the heavy Russian lorries would skid on the smooth ice and land up in the ditch. At the deserted street corners the snow was piled up more than three feet high. We moved very slowly forwards, often at not more than a walking pace. We owe it entirely to the help of the Russians that we were not trapped for on one occasion they had to haul

our frail vehicle out of the snow, which they did as easily as if we were a toy.

It slowly began to get dark and although we were doggedly pushing forwards from one icy ridge to the next, the end of the journey was not yet in sight. The driver, who hated the whole adventure—in normal circumstances he never liked to travel faster than a stolid twenty-five miles an hour—lost heart completely and began to moan louder and louder: 'We'll get stuck. We'll never get out alive.' But despite this gloomy prophecy we did arrive, though it was late at night and everybody had long given up hope of our putting in an appearance.

We were eager to hear what our representative had to say of conditions in general and of Czech personalities. We could compare his impressions with our own when early the next morning we paid a visit to the Czech Premier, Zdenko Fierlinger. As far as our mutual relations went, it was satisfactory and friendly. Fierlinger delivered an inspired speech on the advantages of a planned economy. 'It means the end of economic crises,' he said enthusiastically. Other crises did not seem to trouble him. He showed less understanding where Austrian property in Czechoslovakia was concerned, but we did at least receive the assurance that it would be dealt with differently from German property.

Our next visit was to Dr Eduard Benes, President of the Czechoslovakian Republic. As his country's democratic leader, Benes had made an outstanding name for himself. In Austria, however, he was held responsible for the chaotic post-1918 conditions in the Danube Basin. It was on his initiative—or so it was believed—that inside the framework of the Little Entente Czechoslovakia followed a policy that added complete economic division to the existing political separation of the Danube states. His doctrine seriously undermined the economic position of all the successor states, not to speak of the fact that Austria was economically ruined and driven into the arms of Germany.

But who can now trace the responsibility for the events of that confused epoch, so rife with political errors? It was the future that counted. President Benes received us in a most friendly manner. It did seem to me, however, that the sixty-year-old Benes

...and was...  
...with our eighty-year-old Federal President, Dr. Karel Benes, looked incomparably older, and almost decrepit. This only applied, of course, to his appearance, not to his mind, which was as active as ever. He was proud of his success in 'negotiating' the Soviets 'out' of Czechoslovakia. 'In that way,' he said, 'the free future of Czechoslovakia is assured. In foreign policy a *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union is as necessary to us as it is useful to them.' We cautiously asked him whether the price of evacuation was not very high, whether the positions held by the Communists in the Government might not endanger this freedom in the long run? Benes gave a vehement denial. He declared that 'a political alliance with the Soviet Union was the best security against any kind of Soviet activity'.

Co-operation with Austria seemed to lie close to Benes' heart. It was certainly a friendly gesture on his part to use German, which he spoke with a slight Viennese inflection, almost like an Austrian courtier of former days.

When we left the Hradschin Castle, the residence of the Czech President, we passed by the very windows from which the two Catholic Ministers of Bohemia had been hurled in 1618, an incident usually considered the immediate prelude to the Thirty Years' War. Was not the 'defenestration of Prague' a warning to the new masters of the Hradschin?

Jan Masaryk, the Foreign Minister, was an interesting and likeable personality, a skilled diplomat, a lover of the lighter side of life and an excellent companion. A former Austrian senior lieutenant, he spoke German as fluently as Czech, and being half-American by birth he also had a fluent command of English. He was not at all 'the tough type' and, having no party but only President Benes behind him, he lacked that internal backing which is so important in a crisis, especially to the politician who deals with foreign affairs. He brought with him to our conversations – and this was significant – his Communist Secretary of State, Dr Vlado Clementis, who was considered the intellectual leader of the Communist intelligentsia in the Danube Basin. His presence was the reason why our talks did not go beyond generalities. When we had left and looked back from the wide square in front to the

imposing Palais Czernin behind us, we did not suspect that a few years later Masaryk would meet a mysterious and early death by falling from the window of his offices.

After these two visits the usual round of official calls and diplomatic receptions lasted until late in the evening. Afterwards we invited the officials of the Foreign Ministry to partake of a real Viennese goulash. Many of them spoke with unmistakable yearning of the contemplative calm of old Austria.

But the Prague intermezzo failed to make any deeper impact when the country was inextricably trapped in the snare of a People's Democracy.

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In the meantime, the Inter-Allied treaty-making machinery had begun to get under way. A map of Europe with the occupied areas marked, would at once show any politically informed observer that Austria was the pivot in the balance of East and West. Where Germany was concerned, both sides agreed that a long occupation was unavoidable. But if Western troops were to withdraw from Italy, then the only way in which the effect of this could be counter-balanced in the East would be the Russian evacuation of the Danube states. But without the evacuation of Austria, this was neither possible nor could it be expected of the Soviets. Thus treaties which were intended to normalise conditions in Europe were meaningless if they did not include Austria in their scope.

The four Foreign Ministers recommended to the Paris Peace Conference, which met from 29th July to 15th October 1946, peace treaties with Bulgaria, Finland, Italy, Rumania and Hungary. The list did not include Austria, which meant that the evacuation of Hungary and Rumania, even after the peace treaties had been signed, could not be considered. But the Soviets violently opposed the addition of Austria to the agenda of the peace conference. On 12th July 1946, Molotov replied with sharp pugnacity to the Western attempt to put Austria on the agenda. This opposition to the evacuation of Austria was proof enough of Russian hostility to a European balance of power.

...and West Foreign Office...  
Unfortunately it was insufficient to convince the world. Moreover, the exclusion of Austria from the agenda of the Peace Conference was a cruel historical injustice. Rumania, Bulgaria and, with reservations, Hungary were treated far better, although they had joined the Nazi war-machine of their own free will. Had not Italy also been Hitler's first and most enduring ally? This disregard both of logic and justice was very soon avenged by the loss of Rumania, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to the Cominform.

The British and French Foreign Offices were not entirely guiltless in this development. Many people pursued *vis-à-vis* Austria the same policy of resentment that they did towards Germany. Our representatives noticed this at every step. As late as 1947 an experienced diplomat in the House of Lords described Austria's status as liberated but occupied: she had to bear the responsibility for her share in the war, he said. It was even with a certain pride that the British Minister to Vienna drew my attention to this enlightened formula.

In France this basic political outlook was certainly modified by a traditional partiality for Austria. Even so, as late as the beginning of 1948 our diplomats had to be active in averting French proposals to limit Austrian armaments.<sup>1</sup>

Why were we unable to prevent this development? Until September 1945, there was as good as no Austrian foreign policy. Chancellor Renner had, it is true, established a sort of fragment of a Foreign Office but not until the end of the year could the voice of Austria make itself heard, and even then we lacked for some time the necessary diplomatic machinery. What was more, the statesmen of the West regarded themselves primarily as victors with no special problems where relations with Russia were concerned. Despite this, we began zealously to sound the alarm, even though it was too late to change the diplomatic time-table. In vain did we point out that a *modus operandi* which tried to chop off the shaft of the enemy's spear but left its point embedded in the heart of a sick Europe could only lead to failure. The wave of illusionary peace still ran too high for our criticisms to make any

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 87-88.

## BETWEEN LIBERATION AND LIBERTY

deep impact. So in the end we had to be content with merely putting the Austrian state treaty on the agenda, even if we did so belatedly.

When Austria was invaded by Nazi Germany in 1938, the international reaction was only feeble. A few protests were made, but after a few months the so called Anschluss was recognised *de jure* or *de facto* by most states and in particular by the great powers. Mexico alone refused to recognise the annexation of Austria. A close study of the documents published subsequently (e.g. the British White Paper on the antecedents of the Second World War) reveals that under the Chamberlain Government Great Britain not only tacitly accepted the Anschluss but also sanctioned it indirectly through the intervention of Sir Neville Henderson, the British Ambassador to Berlin. To declare at a moment of international tension that the annexation of a country would not be resisted, provided it took place legally, was bound to be taken by the Nazis as a sign that they need not expect any reaction to their *coup*. It is also doubtful whether there would ever have been any reaction at all if, for other reasons, the war had not broken out.

Not until after the outbreak of war did the great powers begin to take a renewed interest in Austria. After long debate they published on 1st November 1945, the Moscow declaration with the following text:

The Governments of the United Kingdom, the U.S.S.R. and the United States have agreed that Austria, the first free country to fall a victim to Nazi aggression shall be liberated from Nazi domination.

They regard the annexation imposed upon Austria by Germany's penetration of March 15th 1938 as null and void. They consider themselves in no way bound by any changes effected in Austria since that date. They declare that they wish to see re-established a free and independent Austria, and thereby to open the way for the Austrian people themselves as well as those neighbouring states which will be faced with similar problems to find that political and economic security which is the only basis for lasting peace.



## **BETWEEN EAST AND WEST: FOREBODINGS IN PRAGUE**

Austria is reminded, however, that she has a responsibility which she cannot evade for participation in the war on the side of Hitlerite Germany and that in the final settlement, account will inevitably be taken of her own contribution to her liberation.

(Signed) Roosevelt  
Churchill  
Stalin

This declaration gave only half the truth. In the last resort an independent Austria does not depend on the wishes or the diplomatic dexterity of the great power, but solely on the love of the Austrian people for their country. To threaten our independence from the start may perhaps have been a mischievous stroke of Soviet diplomacy, but it was certainly not one in which the Western powers could take any pride.

By the time the war ended no agreements existed on the occupation of Austria—at least that is what I was later assured by a leading member of the British Control Commission. The zonal boundaries in Austria in the early months of the occupation therefore ran precisely where the troops had landed. Not until 10th July 1945 did the European Advisory Committee come to deal with zonal boundaries in Austria. The Committee concluded that the Federal Province of Upper Austria should be divided into two zones, one south and one north of the Danube. The basis of this division was apparently the Soviet intention of controlling both politically and militarily the southern frontier of Czechoslovakia. During this haggling, what was industrially and agriculturally the most important part of Austria fell to the Soviets. A diplomatic instrument, the so-called Control Council Agreement of 5th July 1945 determined the relations between the occupying powers.

The occupation of a country on the zonal system is in itself an invention of the devil. Looked at rationally, a joint occupation should only take place when there is available an internationally organised army with mixed contingent and a clear chain of command. It is absurd to say that forces of this kind are an impossibility. Only indolence and adherence to illusions were present when this

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primitive zonal system was conceived To divide a country into zones and then to administer it by troops of utterly different philosophical and legal outlook is bound to result in constant friction. But in any case occupation troops in Austria were superfluous a thousand men would have been quite sufficient to maintain order. Even here there was revealed the Powers' obvious lack of any policy for Europe as a whole of which I shall have more to say later.

Early in 1946 negotiations for a new Control Agreement were opened. It was in particular the setback in the South Tyrol that obliged the Western negotiators to speed up their efforts.<sup>1</sup> The new agreement was also supposed to soothe the Austrian wound—at least that was what a leading member of the negotiating committee said. A compromise was finally reached which did in important respects improve our international position. Article 6 of the Agreement restored the legislative power of Parliament. Point A of this Article stated:

All legislative measures as defined by the Allied Council, and international agreements which the Austrian Government wishes to make except agreements with one of the Four Powers shall, before they take effect or are published in the State Gazette be submitted by the Austrian Government to the Allied Council. In the case of constitutional laws the written approval of the Allied Council is required, before any such law may be published or put into effect. In the case of all other legislative measures and international agreements it may be assumed that the Allied Council has given its approval if within thirty-one days of the time of receipt by the Allied Commission it has not informed the Austrian Government that it objects to a legislative measure or an international agreement. Such legislative measure or international agreement may then be published or put into effect. The Austrian Government will inform the Allied Council of all international agreements entered into with one or more of the Four Powers.

<sup>1</sup> The South Tyrol question is discussed at length in Chapter Four.  
(Translator's note)

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Under pressure from the Socialist Party a large sector of Austrian industry was nationalised. The process was all the more extensive as many concerns had lost their owners and new private owners were difficult to find. But grave international complications followed Parliament's acceptance of the nationalisation laws. As these also affected the largest part of German assets, including the oil undertakings which the Soviets jealously hung on to, the air was soon thick with Soviet protests and threats. Parliament was not deterred and on 26th July 1946 decided on nationalisation irrespective of claimants' rights. The Soviet Union now declared that this was in variance with the Control Agreement which expressly stated

Article 1 (b) *In regard to the assets specified in Article 3 below neither the Austrian Government nor any subordinate Austrian authority shall effect nationalisation prior written consent of the Allied Commission.*

Article 5, paragraph 4, states that these matters include *the disposal of German property in connection with the existing agreements between the Allies.*

The Soviet Union thereupon issued Decree Number 16, transferring all German assets in the Soviet Zone to the Soviet Property Administration, known by its Russian initials as U.S.S.R. Not only were valuable undertakings included but also firm properties, roads, power stations, private houses and even a cemetery in one peaceful village of Lower Austria. All our objections that German assets were for the most part Austrian assets that had been expropriated by the Nazis were rejected. Parliament was not afraid to call a spade a spade. Even the policeman turns thief if he confiscates stolen property but keeps it for himself, it was said. Violent disputes followed. The U.S.S.R. was declared illegal and its official registration refused. The Austrian court also refused to legalise the Russian right to German assets. For its part, the U.S.S.R. did not give a damn for Austrian regulations. All our attempts to settle the growing conflict by negotiations failed. The Soviet Union took the attitude that any settlement must begin by recognising the



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Soviet legal system, only then could individual cases be discussed. But none of us had any desire to venture on to such slippery ice.

In spite of this never-ending little war with the Soviets and their Communist hangers-on, the Austrian people never lost interest in the heart-felt question of the South Tyrol

## \* The South Tyrol: a Territorial Pawn

By the Treaty of St Germain in 1919 the South Tyrol was taken from Austria and transferred to Italy. This was the result of successful Anglo-French efforts in buying the entry of the Italians into the war with generous promises at the expense of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The price included parts of the so-called Venezia Giulia with Trieste, Istria, Zara, several Adriatic islands near the northern Italian frontier and parts of the Tyrol south of the Brenner Pass.

The area of the Tyrol demanded by Italy was divided into the Italian part—the region round Trient and Rovereto, which was inhabited mainly by an Italian-speaking or a Rhaeto-Romanic population—and the German-speaking area north of the Salurn Pass. For a thousand years the South Tyrol as far as Salurn had been intimately bound up with the North Tyrol north of the Brenner Pass. On either side one found the same language, the same culture, the same traditions—in a word, the same country with an ethnic structure that was in every respect harmonious and united.

The ill-fated decision of St Germain had the gravest consequences for the population of the territory. Nature has left a gulf that is difficult to bridge between the heavy Austrian peasantry of the South Tyrol and the quick-witted Italians whose culture is so completely different. Fascism, true to its principle of the hegemony of the state and to its policy of forcible Italianisation, conducted a reign of terror in the South Tyrol which had the effect of widening the gulf. After his invasion of Austria, Hitler rewarded his accomplice Mussolini with a treaty providing for the emigration of the German-speaking South Tyroleans. Many tens of thousands of them were badly advised and did in fact succumb to the lures of unscrupulous propaganda; Nazi Germany was of course in no position to keep the promises made to the emigrants. At the end of the war, the homeless expatriates were just managing

to keep alive, mainly as DP's in Austria and Southern Germany.

Austria did everything possible to secure their return to their native soil. World public opinion was for the most part well aware of the injustice they had suffered. But the Americans knew virtually nothing of the problem and in the interval before the peace conference there was neither time nor means to bring it to their notice. In England, on the other hand, part of the Opposition under Churchill held the view that the South Tyrol must be returned to Austria.

This was no easy problem for Austrian foreign policy. What made it even more difficult was the fact that the Italian peace treaty essentially lacked any conception of a united Europe. It took no account of Italy's partnership in the defence of the West in future disputes. The treaty imposed severe burdens on Italy: she had to disarm almost entirely, cede territories to Yugoslavia, Greece and France, and also the Italian colonies. Her fleet was for the most part handed over to the Soviet Union, and heavy reparations had to be paid.

Many of these measures were superfluous. Was it wise, for example, to deprive Italy of her colonies? The question had a special importance where Austria was concerned: it was undoubtedly the immediate cause for the widespread Western view that Italy could not also be expected to give up territory on her northern frontier: Italy and Cyrenaica on the South Tyrol—that was more or less the political choice. Naturally, the uncertain position in Egypt may even at that time have played a certain part. Furthermore, politicians in the immediate post-war period had no conception of any consistent policy *en face* Austria. This was partly because of resentment at the share taken in the war by Austrian soldiers, and partly because of a general lack of foresight.

In no discussion of Austria's diplomatic position can the internal political structure of the United States be disregarded. Much more importance is attached there than in Europe to the principle of permitting free and more public elections of administrative and legislative bodies, and once elected there is far less interference in their conduct of affairs. This system gives to the press and pressure groups what is to us an almost unimaginable degree of

influence. The pressure-groups are organised bodies of opinions with common interests. They are also very often composed of people from the same country of origin who use their voting power to pursue definite political aims. The Italian element in the United States is one of the best organised of such groups. The Italians are not only very numerous but they are also concentrated in important political centres such as New York and Chicago.

Little could be set against this on the Austrian side. The Austrians in the United States are far less numerous, are dispersed throughout the whole country and split up into so many small groups of different views that their influence on the formation of political opinion is regrettably very slight. Here and there an Austrian in a prominent position was of course able to exercise some influence. But it was certainly not enough to challenge such an important political grouping as that of the Italian. Certain journalists told us that even if we came to an agreement with Italy could we hope to gain the backing of American public opinion for our views on the South Tyrol.

When I once reminded to a politically influential American that it was difficult to interest American public opinion in a small peasant people like the South Tyroleans he lively replied: 'The Italians have one of the most important pressure groups in the States and you have none.' And how right he was. There can indeed be little doubt of the impact made by such groups on American policy.

Despite this handicap we did not rely in publishing all our diplomatic machinery behind the South Tyrol question. It did not amount to much. We never denied directly the return of the South Tyrol to Austria, our demands did not go beyond plebiscite.

This, however, is not the place to describe the wealth of geographic, ethnographic and economic data that we assembled in support of our claim.

Our requests which were given quite a friendly welcome were received most favourably perhaps by the French Government. Even in England, in the cautious Foreign Office, there were not a few people who found our claims were justified and feared difficulties if again no Austro-Italian agreement was reached.

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In Italy too there were people of discernment who did not deny that our demands were morally justified and that a plebiscite would favour Austria. Enlightened Italians openly said that in spite of vested interests the best thing would be a solution in accordance with the dictates of reason and harmony. Different Western diplomats also sought for compromise solutions.

At this point I should mention that the first American draft of an Austrian state treaty did, at our initiative, provide for a plebiscite in the South Tyrol.<sup>1</sup> But during 1946 when the political obstacles that I have already described began to make their presence felt, this decision was withdrawn.

The main point of the compromise would have been a corridor linking the industrial zone with the district of Trentino, thereby removing them from the plebiscite area. Other compromises, such as the demilitarisation of the South Tyrol or, in an extreme case, perhaps even granting Italy the right to employ her troops for the defence of the area, were also discussed.

But other factors admitted of less favourable prophecies. About the end of 1945 the Austrian Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Adolf Scharf, travelled to London at the invitation of the Labour Party for talks with the Foreign Minister, Mr. Bevin. In an exposé of British policy *vis-à-vis* Austria, he was told that the British Government would only support frontier adjustments.

The entire population of the North Tyrol, reinforced by delegations from the South Tyrol, held a mass demonstration in the spring of 1946 at Innsbruck to back up our demands. Hundreds of picturesque archery groups and choirs were assembled. International news-reel companies and many foreign correspondents were present, which gave the South Tyrol an enhanced international significance.

During the same period, without Austrian public opinion fully realising what was atfoot, the third Foreign Ministers' Conference began in Paris on 25th April 1946. Violent disputes broke out

<sup>1</sup> Legally speaking, since Austria had never been at war, there could be no peace treaty as such between her and the Allies. Hence, the treaty to be negotiated between the two parties was known as the 'Austrian state treaty,' although it had the effect of a peace treaty. (Translator's note.)



between the Soviet Union and the Western powers in their discussion of the Italian peace treaty. But on one thing they were in agreement: no plebiscite, only frontier adjustments. The Western powers have attributed the reason for this decision to the intervention of Molotov. The conference resolution itself spoke only of minor frontier change, but if we had once succeeded in undermining the principle of the inviolability of the northern Italian frontier, new possibilities would have opened up. Even though a plebiscite had been prevented, and with it a full success for Austria, it could at least be hoped that frontier changes on an equivalent scale would have led to a treatable compromise solution for the South Tyrol.

When the result of the conference was published in the Tyrol an elemental outburst of disappointment seized the population and a general strike was called. A crowd of demonstrators marched through the streets and only the wise intervention of the French Governor General Pierre Veizel, who confined the troops to barracks and imposed an exit ban, prevented clashes between the latter and the population.

This minor protest made a deep impression on world public opinion and obliged the Western powers to seek some way out of a difficult situation. The Austrian Parliament held a solemn session of protest in which Imler lay on an attitude to the decisions of the Foreign Ministers in favour of the Government's strong protest. Only a few days later, on 14th May, we were invited to send our demands for frontier adjustments to the four delegates to the Italian peace treaty in Paris. We immediately began to make our preparations and finally worked out the only solution worth considering: the reintegration in Austria of the Pustertal and the communications centre of Braxen. Although our concessions would not have solved the South Tyrol question entirely, they did at least ensure a considerable improvement in the communications system of Western Austria in a more favourable system of communications between the Western provinces. Further hidden possibilities might also have emerged: in all probability Italy would have been ready to agree to an Italian-Austrian condominium of the whole German-speaking area as a safeguard for the Brenner frontier, had

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we permitted Italy to exercise military control over the area. In spite of all the complexities, the decision to revise the Brenner frontier would have enormously strengthened our future bargaining position.

Such possibilities could not of course be discussed openly. At best, friendly states could be informed that a solution could be prepared along these lines taking account both of Italian and of Austrian interests.

All we could do initially was to outline in detail our demands for frontier adjustments and support them as best we could with the abundant arguments at our disposal. Before we left for Paris these demands were approved by the Council of Ministers. It was only necessary now to get together a suitable delegation.

What did our diplomatic chances look like? They were not unfavourable. According to the reports of Norbert Bischoff, our representative in Paris, the Quai d'Orsay was convinced that an acceptable compromise solution, as for example the integration of the Pustertal, could be reached. Reports from England were not so optimistic and in Washington unhappily the South Tyrol question aroused only slight interest. In Europe where the problem of the South Tyrol had long been familiar and where it weighed on the conscience of many, we had numerous supporters with Churchill at their head. On 5th June 1946 he told the House of Commons:

I know of no case in the whole of Europe, more than that of the Austrian Tyrol where the Atlantic Charter and the subsequent Charter of 1940 might have been extended to the people who dwell in this small but well defined region which is now involved in the general war settlement. Why cannot they have a fair and free plebiscite there under the supervision of the great powers? Let me put this question. Is it not illogical to have one standard of ethnic criteria for Trieste and Venezia Giulia, and another for the Southern Tyrol? The Soviet Government are quite logical, they are willing to override the ethnic criteria in both cases.

There are no grounds for suggesting that any decisions adverse

to the restoration of the Southern Tyrol to Austria were taken by the Government of which I was the head

No quarrel remains between us and Austria. Every liberal principle which we proclaim—and the application of liberal principles is the main hope of Europe—will be impugned by the assignment of the Austrian Tyrol to Italy against the wishes of its inhabitants. I have every desire that we should live on the most friendly terms with Italy. I look forward to seeing that historic country take its place in the concert of Europe.

But Churchill was only the leader of the Opposition. The mood of the British Government was considerably less cordial.

In the South Tyrol itself our proposals met with sharp opposition. A reason for this was the fear of the German-speaking population of the Vinschgau and the lower Eisackthal that the acceptance of our proposed solution would lead to their isolation and leave them exposed to rapid Italianisation. We were later informed that leading personalities of the South Tyrol had frankly told American diplomats and the British authorities of their opposition to our solution.

In view of these conflicting opinions we considered it advisable to take to Paris with us only one specialised geographic expert, Dr H. Thulhammer of Innsbruck.

Probably the importance of the tactical position involved in the military control of the Brenner never became quite clear north and south of the Pass. Italy invested no little effort in its fortification, not to speak of the frontier's symbolic character as proclaimed by thirty years of Italian nationalist writing. Italy would have been ready to make far-reaching administrative and material concessions in the whole of the South Tyrol in order to return military control over the Brenner—especially so if this control were recognised in a state treaty based on the possession of the Pass itself.

We expected—correctly, as it later appeared—that on our arrival in Paris we would be asked: 'Will you be satisfied with the award of the territory indicated and do you renounce any further claim?' In view of the prevailing mood in Austria, it would have been hopeless to gain popular approval for such a declaration. A

mere Cabinet decision that disregarded public opinion would undoubtedly have led to a vote of 'no confidence' in Parliament, so that although this possibility would have considerably improved our chances of success, it had to be excluded.

By 23rd May we were ready to leave for Paris. On the same day, the British Minister to Vienna invited us on behalf of his Government to extend our visit to London where we could also take part in talks on the Austrian situation.

Our representative in Paris had found us accommodation in the immediate vicinity of our Legation in the Rue Beaujon. The next day we began at once to organise our work. One section of the delegation was to occupy itself with giving the final polish to our memorandum, of which a rough draft had been prepared in Vienna. The Legation itself prepared a comprehensive programme of visits.

Ours was the first official Austrian visit to the West since 1937. This made it seem advisable not only to meet the officials of the Quai d'Orsay but also various personalities in public life. It was no less necessary to make contact as soon as possible both officially and privately, with the four delegates of the great powers entrusted with the drafting of the Austrian state policy. So there was much coming and going in the Rue Beaujon.

It is customary for every foreign statesman on his first visit to Paris to lay a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. That we also were expected to perform this simple rite showed that we were not included amongst the enemies of France. Almost ten years had passed since the last official Austrian representative had stood before the Arc de Triomphe.

The next few days were taken up with numerous visits of which the most important was to Georges Bidault, the then French Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Our meeting went off very satisfactorily. Bidault not only assured us of his sympathy for Austria but also promised to give us full support in our minimum demand for the transfer of the Pustertal region to Austria. After these preliminaries we went to the detailed discussions in the Palais Luxembourg. Immediately afterwards I flew to London.

People often ask where the basic difference lies between the British and the French. This is most pronounced in their diplomatic methods. The Frenchman is more temperamental and conciliatory, the British, on the other hand, are more calm and reserved.

It is a fine testimony to British democracy that the leaders of the Opposition regularly take part in official receptions to foreign visitors. In our case, the non-party aims held in common both by the Government and the Opposition was shown by the presence of both Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Minister, and of Anthony Eden, the former Foreign Minister.

On 4th June 1946 the *Daily Telegraph* published an interview I gave to its diplomatic correspondent showing the relative importance of our different problems:

1. The powers should sign a treaty with Austria—not a peace treaty, because Austria never declared war—clearly establishing her position.
2. Division of the country into four zones should cease at once and occupation troops be progressively withdrawn.
3. South Tyrol frontier rectifications should be granted, not only on grounds of justice but as minimum help for the internal authority of the Austrian Government.
4. The Danube to be opened to shipping of all Danubian states from mouth to source.
5. Full use of and access to Trieste for Austria.
6. Clear withdrawal of claims on Austrian industry for German reparations payments.
7. Admission of Austria to the United Nations.

Mr (now Sir) Gladwyn Jebb, the English delegate to the conference drafting the Italian peace treaty, had also been summoned to London. He frequently referred to the Russians' negative attitude over the South Tyrol. Although Bevin was also constantly expressing concern at Russian opposition, he promised to 'do his best for us'. On the other hand, a leading politician said to me: 'We will give you now a slice of the country with about 5,000 inhabitants'—he meant the Pustertal—and 'I hope you will finally be satisfied'.

Jebb inquired whether we would be prepared to accept the

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separation of the Pustertal and then to issue a declaration renouncing the remainder of the South Tyrol. For the reasons I have explained above we had to reject this suggestion.

Both in Paris and in London an Austrian state treaty was naturally discussed in detail. We did not hide our disappointment that the great powers had not put Austria on their agenda and we expressed the wish that views be exchanged on the Austrian question at the first opportunity.

But we were always told that the matter could only be solved in agreement with the Soviet Union which refused to discuss it. It was interesting to note, by the way, that at this time the British were the only people who did not cherish any illusions about Soviet policy.

Our conversations with the man in the street—waiters, chauffeurs, business people—were almost as interesting as the contact with official personalities. We found that on the whole Austria enjoyed a great deal of sympathy in England. Although ill feeling at the part played by Austrian soldiers in the war was more noticeable than in France. We were forced to realise that a long road lay ahead of us before we could win over British public opinion unreservedly to our side.

In its leading article of 1st June the *Manchester Guardian* wrote that one of the reasons why Austria had hitherto made only slight progress in her reconstruction was the fact that the Allies could still not decide whether to treat the country as liberated or as conquered. Even when we talked to Austria's friends we could not rid ourselves of the feeling that they looked on us more from the tourist angle, as an interesting colourful people. They had still not realised that Austria was a decent hardworking and gifted member of the European family of nations.

Side by side with those who favoured us in the South Tyrol question, there were others who were either cool or hostile. A group of young Members of Parliament, one of whom had been in touch with the partisans in North Italy, said openly that in his opinion the South Tyrol belonged to Italy. Italy was an ally and Austria an enemy, he declared.

There were several reasons for these anti-Austrian tendencies

**England.** In the past we had neglected to foster closer contact with the Anglo-Saxon world, although this would have been of the greatest importance to us. Moreover, public opinion was led most unobjectively by a definite historical movement, influenced by certain Slav circles of Old Austria and the School of Slavonic and East European Studies. Many Austrian emigres, because of their personal position, were also inclined to give a distorted picture of the country.

As far as our English chauffeurs were concerned, they found us too impulsive. They failed to understand how we were able to rush from one end of London to the other without ever having time for a cup of tea.

We also visited Portsmouth and Southampton. From there we travelled directly back to Paris. After a short meeting with the Foreign Ministers' Deputies we returned to Vienna.

Even experienced diplomats thought it hardly doubtful that a compromise solution to the South Tyrol question was possible. We never dreamed that out of a clear blue sky the Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers would reject our demands. But that is what happened, without anyone even bothering to use diplomatic channels to inform us in advance. We were later told by a leading member of the American delegation that Molotov had created difficulties from the start. The Western powers had accepted his objections, in order to keep the negotiations moving. The American gave as reasons for the conference's decision the fact that Italy had suffered huge territorial losses in spite of her relationship with the Allies, belated though this was, and the prevailing impression that even the separation of the Pustertal would not lead to a peaceful solution given the Austrian refusal to renounce the rest of the South Tyrol.

I denounced the decision in a sharp speech to Parliament, which did not fail to make its impact on world public opinion. The *New York Herald Tribune* wrote, for example, "Austria protests against the South Tyrolean decision. A scathing critic on the Foreign Ministers' Conference. Gruber burns them up!" The *Times* of 25th June published the real reason for the rejection of our demands.

On the surface it would seem that the Ministers were influenced by Italy's economic arguments, which they considered to outweigh Austria's ethnic claims. But the Austrian Government also brought forward economic arguments in support of its claim, emphasising both the value of the railway and the Austrian need to develop the tourist industry within its territory. It seems clear that the Ministers had unacknowledged reasons for coming down on Italy's side. They seem to have tacitly agreed to leave Italy's South Tyrol as part recompense for the territories which it stands to lose in the colonies and in the Julian March, quite apart from the small French claims in the Alpes Maritimes. The decision was basically political.

According to a Tass despatch of 5th July from Moscow, Isakov, one of *Pravda's* foreign observers wrote:

The speech of the Austrian Foreign Minister Gruber in Parliament on 3rd July made a curious impression. It is known that at the Four Power Conference in Paris the Austrian claims to frontier changes were rejected. This decision was a decision by all the four powers taking part in the conference.

Herr Gruber gave quite a different version of this fact, devoting a long part of his speech to behind the scenes gossip of the alleged views of the participants in the conference in their treatment of the Austrian demands.

This version made it seem as though the United States, Britain and France had welcomed the Austrian demands with great sympathy and that they were only rejected because of the negative attitude of the Soviet Union. But it was not explained why these three powers which—so Gruber maintains—had shown such great sympathy for the Austrian claims were in fact unable to agree with the Soviet Union on means to satisfy them.

The Foreign Minister discusses the foreign policy of the Soviet Union with quite extraordinary impudence when he maintains, for example, that it is obvious the Soviet Union primarily desired to give its political support only to those countries maintaining close friendly relations with the Soviet Union as a result of their



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ethnic and political affinity. It all sounds like a new setting of that hackneyed song of the 'Iron Curtain' rearranged to the tune of a Viennese operetta.

What do these Moscow polemics reveal? They show that Moscow wanted least of all to strengthen the peasant structure of Austria by the incorporation of the South Tyrol. But neither was there any Western willingness to give us diplomatic support against Italy, for the reasons given above. The real sin of allied policy was precisely its rejection of a plebiscite which would have provided a fair and logical democratic solution.

The debate hitherto on the South Tyrol had shown that the great powers first intended to cut themselves slices out of the Italian cake before giving thought to the satisfaction of Tyrolean claims. Thus the further pursuit of our aims set us formidable problems. Should we undertake for example futile demonstrations in the coming months and years? This was a thorny path that could only lead to disappointments and inust in the long run work out at the expense of our patriotism and unity. It is always possible to arouse a people in emergency and to demand sacrifices from them. But if these are fruitless it is difficult to prevent general disillusionment.

Moreover, successfully to endure the nerve-wracking struggle against Russian attempts to bring Austria under Communist control would probably consume all our reserves of energy. We could not simultaneously live in more or less open hostility with Italy as well.

In spite of all our bitterness, therefore, the situation forced us to seek a *modus vivendi* with Italy and a solution which would allow the people of South Tyrol at least a minimum of freedom, permitting the country to retain its ethnic character until overall European developments caused even these frontiers to crumble. It was very difficult to struggle through to a realistic policy. But as soon as we had recognised its necessity we went to work with determination. The attitude of the great powers did not encourage us to ask them once again for their help. We turned to smaller but none the less highly respected states and tried to win over Holland

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and Belgium to support corresponding proposals at the peace conference, summoned for 18th August 1946. At the same time we asked them to secure for us a direct invitation to the Conference so that we would be able to press our claims ourselves.

Both the Belgian and the Dutch Foreign Ministers, Paul Henri Spaak and C. G. Van Boetzelaer Oosterhout, supported by a staff of leading international lawyers, energetically sought to mediate between the Austrian and Italian delegations. In Paris also, it was always diplomats from the Benelux states who helped us with advice and deeds. We were in fact, invited at the beginning of August by the Secretary General of the peace conference to state our attitude on the Italian peace treaty. This time it was primarily necessary to ensure to the South Tyrolean minority internationally guaranteed rights inside Italy. To this end we invited the South Tyrolean People's Party to send three delegates to Paris as advisers. Two of these delegates, Dr von Guggenberg and Dr Folger, later became members of the Italian Parliament.

As our general instructions for the conference, the Council of Ministers laid down that the utmost possible must be done to secure the ethnic rights of the South Tyroleans, who had been hard hit by the rejection of our demand for a plebiscite. Their members of our delegation soon saw with renewed hope that we had not yet given up our efforts on their behalf and that the peace conference offered excellent opportunities to defend their interests.

As before we had our headquarters in the Rue Beignon. We had been advised to make our declaration on the Italian peace treaty to the plenary assembly of the conference as soon as possible. The wording demanded the greatest care: it had to take account of our delicate situation and at the same time to cover completely all the possible political contingencies. This meant that we could not disregard Austrian dependence on foreign aid—hence our demand for the swift conclusion of an Austrian state treaty. On the other hand, we must exploit to the full the great opportunity offered by a conference, whose task was to safeguard, as far as was possible, the vital rights of the South Tyroleans.

We made contact with all the twenty-one states represented, so that we might be in a position to assess these factors accurately.

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and weigh them up one against the other. Six other states were also invited to give their views. Italy, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Finland and Albania, whose peace treaties did in fact form the real subject-matter of the conference. Understandably, our programme of visits was most comprehensive. Once again our path led to the Dutch and Belgian delegations. Our conversations with the latter and also with General Smuts showed us that if we were unable to reach an understanding with Italy, we had no hope of achieving our aims. General Smuts undoubtedly cherished deep sympathies for the South Tyroleans, they are a peasant people after his own heart, and the unjust decision of the Peace Conference after the First World War had always troubled his conscience, he once said. Even so, he thought it inconceivable that the conference would adopt a decision fulfilling our demands, for the principal problems before it overshadowed everything else besides which East West tension was constantly on the increase. He stuck to this view, even if a sympathetic statesman had been willing to move the necessary resolution. From the remarks we drew important conclusions as to our future tactics.

We now prepared a moderate declaration, putting the main emphasis on the rehabilitation of Austria. We outlined Austria's position in 1939 and did not omit to mention the lack of any reaction by the great powers to our enforced inclusion in the German Reich. We pointed to the more than 70,000 Austrians who had suffered in concentration camps to our internal resistance and to the active share we had taken in the struggle for our liberation. In support of this part of our statement we quoted at length from Moscow Radio, *Pravda* and the declaration of Marshal Tolbukhin who, on his entry into Austria in 1945, had congratulated and praised the population for their co-operation in the freeing of the country.

Even Molotov, the Russian Foreign Minister, and his Deputy, Vyshinsky, could not restrain a smile of assent when these declarations were translated to the plenary session of the conference. Later in our statement we described the fate of the South Tyroleans, and mentioned, of course, the pact between Hitler and Mussolini. We ended with an urgent appeal to the powers to co-operate

in a solution that would give the South Tyrol new hope and its inhabitants security against oppression. Nor did we fail to use the opportunity of making our fundamental demand for a plebiscite.

We felt keenly the importance of our participation in the conference. As one ambassador put it, we once again belonged to the 'best people'. Ten seats had been reserved for the Austrian delegation by the General Secretariat in the large conference hall of the Palais Luxembourg, although we had difficulty in finding enough delegates to fill them. It is easy to see why we felt a certain satisfaction when it is recalled that even the delegates of those states with which peace treaties were concluded were not allowed to be present, either before or after they had made their declarations, whereas we were allotted permanent seats next to the Russians in the semi-circle of delegates. But our satisfaction was only formal—we would have far preferred a material one.

In contrast to other representatives who often spoke for more than an hour and therefore hardly received the full attention of the conference, I did not speak for longer than twenty-five minutes, and I spoke in English.

The conference also had its lighter side. Night after night Paris glittered with festive illuminations. Every delegation gave cocktail parties, luncheons and huge dinners in honour of the conference members. The French Government held its own receptions in the Hall of Mirrors in Versailles, where the German Empire had been founded in 1871 and the Versailles Treaty signed in 1919. On both sides of the road from Paris to Versailles the Gardes Mobiles were drawn up to keep out gate-crashers. But the quick-witted Parisians were not impressed. They simply hired taxis, drove through the check-points, and arrived in fine fettle at the scene of the festivities. No one was surprised when 6,000 guests suddenly turned up instead of the 2,000 invited and cleared the tables inside a few minutes. The Protocol department had carefully reserved special rooms for V.I.P.s which were guarded by two severe-looking ushers. But even that did not deter gate-crashers. I heard, for example, of one worthy Parisian who, when held up by the 'guardians of the temple', unctuously exclaimed: 'But I am the

ambassador of Nebraska" leaving in his wake two nonplussed guardians, racking their brains to remember where the celebrated state of Nebraska was to be found.

My colleagues and myself visited all the Foreign Ministers present in Paris, hoping to arouse interest in Austria and win them over to our cause. We mostly received a friendly welcome. One South American diplomat assured me how pleased he was to see me again, for our last meeting in St Germain had been almost thirty years ago. 'I was not a little surprised it being confused with President Renner, who was almost eighty.

The chief delegate of New Zealand said he would gladly support us. But in old dispute between New Zealand and Austria must first be settled, he added. Somewhat disconcerted I had to listen to the tale of the Austrian South Sea explorer, Anthon Reischek, who had carried off from the New Zealand bush in the 1880's some Maori skeletons to the Natural History Museum in Vienna. These valuable bones must now be restored to New Zealand, he declared. I was rather embarrassed for although I need of course of this sad story I had never given it any importance. The New Zealand Foreign Office seemed to have it still on its mind. I personally had no objection to the repatriation of the Maori skeletons but I had to reply evasively and leave them to surmise that the matter would be immediately rejected. In cases like that one can never be certain how public opinion will react. Have not museum pieces caused whole peoples to white their position? The New Zealander showed himself obviously distressed with my answer and undertook to give energetic support to our demands.

Dinners, where we were both present again brought me into contact with Jan Masaryk, the Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, and his Secretary for State for Foreign Affairs, Václav Clementis. Masaryk's conversation was as lively, colorful and amusing as ever. He soberly promised to vote for our claim at the conference. When I asked whether he ought not to be prepared for difficulties from his Eastern neighbours he answered forthrightly, 'Let them cool off at the North Pole'. But later Molotov must have made him see 'reason', for, in the end, Masaryk did in fact vote against the Austrian proposals.

The representatives of Hungary, Ferenc Nagy, the Premier, and his Foreign Minister, János Gyöngyössi, tried to establish active contact with us. Nagy wanted to visit us at the health resort of Senninger but the subsequent notorious events in Hungary nipped in the bud any hope of collaboration between us. It was more difficult to establish contact with Yugoslavia. We had no plan to visit her delegate, Mles Bebler for, as the Yugoslav Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he had his own territorial claims against Austria. Discretion was called for. But in order to bridge the difficulty we asked one of our friends, the Mexican Ambassador in Paris, to give a lunch that would provide the chance of an informal get-together. The small function at the Mexican Embassy passed off pleasantly. Bebler, intelligent and very temperamental, suggested an agreement obviously directed against Italy which he drafted there and then on a table napkin. We were supposed to support the incorporation of Trieste in Yugoslavia who would in her turn support the return of the South Tyrol to Austria. (This draft was later published and laid before the Austrian Parliament to ascertain its attitude.) But in view of the tension already perceptible, any such agreement would have meant the end of Western support for our claims: not to speak of the fact that it would have compromised our fight for Cuneo. We could not go into the Yugoslav proposal in any detail and withdrew with the usual assurances of good neighbourliness.

The situation at the peace conference was such that we could achieve hardly anything of positive benefit to the South Tyroleans without prior agreement with Italy. On the other hand the peace conference was the only place where the inclusion of an agreement in the Italian peace treaty and its international guarantee could be obtained.

Our negotiations with the Italians opened slowly and cautiously. I invited Count Cirandini, the Italian Ambassador in London, who was visiting Paris, to have tea with me at my hotel. Evidently the Western powers had already told the Italians that they must come to an agreement with us in order to avoid fresh difficulties at the conference. Cirandini began of his own accord to discuss the possibility of bilateral negotiations. His country, he said, was in a

distressing position for she was being assailed from all sides, losing her colonies, her fleet, and parts of her territory to Yugoslavia, Albania and even France. In this fearful situation it was impossible for Italy to agree to the Austrian demand for the cession of the South Tyrol—not even if this demand was fundamentally perhaps more justified than the demands of other states. The Italians did want to try, however, to establish a friendly understanding with us, even whilst opposing our demands for territorial concessions. Carandini suggested an Austro-Italian customs union. The frontier question would thereby settle itself and the way be easily found to make the necessary administrative adjustments.

On formal grounds alone these far-reaching plans were out of the question for they must inevitably come to grief at the veto of the Allied Council, especially of its Russian members. But even the praiseworthy aspect of the suggestion required thorough study before it could be taken at all seriously in Austria.

We would certainly have supported a larger project of union—embracing for example Austria, Italy, France, Switzerland and Germany. But at this time direct co-operation with what was a major power in comparison with Austria seemed too problematical and risky. Our counter-proposal provided for a condominium over the South Tyrol, with Italy exercising military control and ourselves in charge of internal and cultural matters.

The economic arrangements that we suggested were intended to give preferential treatment to the interests of the inhabitants of the South Tyrol as well as to foster future co-operation between the Italians and ourselves. We handed these proposals to Carandini in the form of an unofficial note, in *aide-memoire* that was not binding, and he promised to contact Rome.

The next phase of the negotiations was a tough item-by-item struggle. Every word of the texts exchanged was thoroughly bargained over. These sessions, as well as our own consultations with the delegates from the South Tyrol and the members of our diplomatic staff, often lasted till late at night. Not until a month later had things progressed far enough for direct talks between the Italian Premier, de Gasperi, and myself to seem advisable.

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The talks were hampered by the fact that both sides were pursuing tactical side-issues. Cirindini wanted from us an explicit declaration renouncing the South Tyrol. As things were, we could in no circumstances agree to this, although it might perhaps have been traded for much in the way of South Tyrolean autonomy. The most that seemed to us defensible was a written assurance to de Gasperi that we would look on the agreement as a *point de départ* for improved relations between Italy and Austria.

We ourselves wanted the agreement to be included in the Italian peace treaty. The population of the South Tyrol, disillusioned and embittered by decades of Fascist oppression, had little confidence in Italian assurances. They therefore considered the most modest concessions within the framework of an international treaty that offered definite legal guarantees far more effective than factual agreements, however precise.

The Austrian statesman Ignaz Seipel, once said: 'In politics there is no absolute no or never.' Could it not be possible to settle mutual anxieties and complaints with a democratic Italy in a democratic way? But what had to be borne in mind was the danger of a new dictatorship or a future regime hostile to Austria. The mistrust of the South Tyroleans was understandable, their fight for definite securities justified. But we were working against time: the inclusion of the agreement in the peace treaty had to be moved at the conference itself. This was all the more urgent, for we realised that only the conference offered a tactical opportunity to achieve something for the South Tyrol. Above all, it enabled us to confer on an autonomous settlement an international character.

The mistrust felt by the South Tyroleans, had the agreement not been included in the peace treaty, would probably have paralysed any attempt at a solution. Our mutual interest demanded that the favourable moment be exploited, despite the fact that there was no lack of attempts to overthrow our policy and prevent the inclusion of the agreement in the treaty. But we held firm, and finally a joint proposal was made to this effect by both the Italian and Austrian delegations.

After week-long negotiations there still remained a few points



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which could only be dealt with in direct talks with de Gasperi. Understandably enough, the South Tyroleans demanded the inclusion of a clause extending and securing the right of South Tyrolean officials to share in the administration of the territory. We had no little trouble in making the Italians accept this. The most essential point—the delimitation of the area—had also to be discussed. In other words we had to ascertain whether the agreement referred only to the German speaking South Tyrol or also to the Italian-speaking district of Trentino that had likewise belonged to Austria before 1918. The solution of the problem is complicated by the fact that de Gasperi himself a native of Trentino, had promised his fellow-countrymen in an enormous administration. Now he was obviously afraid that he would not be able to get either plan through the Italian Parliament if in the meantime a combination of the two in one form or another could not be brought about.

Our discussions in the Italian Legation were often dramatic, showing that any further limitation, that went beyond what had already been achieved might endanger the whole structure of the treaty. The South Tyrol in delegates also had no wish to risk that. But they did request that the explanation of the territorial clause, as discussed between de Gasperi and myself should be given to their delegation in the form of a letter or a bargaining weapon. Despite the unusual nature of this step I expressed my willingness as follows:

Dr Otto von Guggenberg,  
South Tyrolean Delegation,  
Paris

Dear Dr Guggenberg,

Regarding the delimitation of the autonomous province, I should like to inform you of the following.

The original text of the Italian draft of Article 10 of the peace treaty read as follows: "The structure and the circumscription of this regional autonomy will be, etc." This text was returned by us to Ambasciatore Cinnadini as unacceptable. He explained that he was not empowered to go beyond his instructions and therefore this point was remitted to Premier de Gasperi for

clarification. During the conversation with de Gasperi, to which I was accompanied by Heinrich Schmid, our Minister to London, we explained to the Premier that the whole understanding would fail if he insisted on this draft of Article 10. De Gasperi expounded to us at length the reasons which had impelled him to try to make common cause with the people of Trentino. But at our insistence he declared he fully understood that this could never be achieved against the will of the South Tyroleans, for if autonomy had to be forced on them then the agreement would naturally have lost its meaning.

De Gasperi therefore gave us definite assurances that there could be no question of extending the autonomous frontiers against the will of the South Tyroleans. He did not, however, consider it impossible that given the strong economic bonds and consequent common interests between the province of Trentino and South Tyrol some possibility of co-operation might be found. If the great majority of the South Tyrolean People's Party was agreeable to a settlement on these lines he did not want to exclude it entirely. He added that the situation was such that the Italians in the South Tyrol were much more violently opposed to union with the people of Trentino than the South Tyroleans themselves and, vice versa, that the people of Trentino demanded in many respects a much more radical autonomy than the South Tyroleans.

I thereupon explained to de Gasperi that any solution to gain the free approval of the South Tyroleans without putting them under any pressure would also be welcomed in Austria. Nevertheless we must demand that the text be drawn up in such a way as to make it clear that to extend the borders of the autonomous area would require the agreement of the South Tyroleans. . . .

In addition, Carandini handed us an Italian map of the autonomous area which coincided with the views of the South Tyroleans, with the exception of the three communities of Belluno. . . .

On 5th September 1946 the agreement was signed by Premier de

Gasperi and myself in the Italian Embassy. On this solemn occasion we drank to the welfare of both our countries and their mutual relations.

In our conversation de Gasperi and I touched on the whole scope of Italo-Austrian relations. He also mentioned the basic principles of the treaties binding us. We were both of the opinion that the future of our agreement depended on the overall evolution of European politics. Should these one day lead to a united Europe, then our agreement on the South Tyrol would prove a genuine success, and serve to some extent as a model for the settlement of inter-state problems. But should nationalism revive in its old radical form, then an agreement of that kind could hardly be a suitable basis for good-neighbourly relations.

Tense days and hours followed the signature of the agreement. Attempts were made to prevent its inclusion in the peace treaty. Even during the negotiations themselves, the British had put pressure on us, threatening that the conference would simply pass on to other matters if we could not settle our differences. But we did not let ourselves be diverted. Our reply was more than cool.

As we could soon see that willingness to include the agreement in the peace treaty weakened more and more, energetic Austrian intervention was necessary in order to ensure at the very least a united Western proposal. The agreement was then enthusiastically hailed by the West as a first success in international co-operation. Foreign Ministers Byrnes, Bevin and Bidault sent cordial letters of congratulation to de Gasperi and myself.

For obvious motives the Eastern bloc denounced the agreement. The Soviet Union and its partners feared a quick normalisation of Austro-Italian relations and their close economic co-operation which must considerably reduce the chances of involving Austria in Eastern alliances.

A curious double game began when the South Tyroleans were invited to the Soviet Embassy to make their views known. They were told that the agreement in no way corresponded to the true interests and that its acceptance could only harm their claims, which were now so suddenly justified! The Soviet Embassy saw

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to it that the public was kept fully informed of this South Tyrolean 'visit'

In Austria the Communist press opened a passionate campaign against the agreement. It cried murder, treason and tried to find allies amongst the most violent nationalists, whom it usually stigmatised as dirty reactionaries. This propaganda offensive finally forced me to fly to Vienna for the week end to inaugurate in all haste the necessary counter measures. But I returned to Paris convinced that this hornets' nest would give us no peace for a long time to come.

At the peace conference the Eastern bloc voted solidly against the inclusion of the Austro-Italian agreement in the peace treaty. This included Czechoslovakia although only the evening before Masaryk had assured me that this time he would certainly vote for Austria.

As we expected further organised attempts to put pressure on the Austrian delegation to withdraw our demand for the inclusion of the agreement on the peace treaty. I left Paris for three days for an undisclosed destination. I gave the Legation strict instructions to tell any enquirer that in the absence of the Minister nothing could be done.

My conduct proved wise and effective. Matters took their course undisturbed and in the end the conference accepted by a two-thirds majority a recommendation to include the treaty as an appendix to the Italian peace treaty. Our friends from the Benelux countries and the British Dominions, especially General Smuts, had made a great contribution to this decision. It concluded for the time being our diplomatic efforts on behalf of the South Tyrol.

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In subsequent parliamentary debates and in numerous publications the most varied reproaches were brought against our efforts in Paris. The texts were said to be imprecise and there were complaints that Parliament had had no opportunity to state its attitude. These criticisms did not do justice to the real position. In Paris we had first to fight for the inclusion of certain clauses in the peace treaty and no decision of Parliament could have had any influence

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on this. It was simply a question of achieving the best possible solution—or giving up altogether. As we had nothing at all to offer in return and, above all, as we could not renounce our basic demands and only had generally friendly inclinations to rely on, these attacks showed nothing more than a lack of understanding of our diplomatic *point à déployer*. It is utopian to suppose that making an international treaty more precise means greater security, if there is no common interest in the fulfilment of the treaty. In international intercourse paper alone offers no security if the sincere acceptance of precise legal principles is not present on both sides.

The conception of so-called regional autonomy also came in for strong criticism. But the critics overlooked the fact that individual institutions were created for the German speaking province of Bozen, clearly giving it a special regime constitutionally and internationally. Not until this settlement was reached did the possibility at all exist of enabling the South Tyrol population to bring its complaints before an international tribunal. Although it must be clear that such right of complaint can only be considered as an *ultima ratio*—a last resort—and only to be involved in an extreme case if, for example, the fundamental rights of the ethnic minority were put in jeopardy. A complaint could lead to grave disputes demanding much sacrifice. The maintenance of generally friendly relations must rank as the first and most important security of the interests of the South Tyrol. This—and not the text in itself, was the pre-condition of genuine support for the treaty.

If Italy acknowledged the intention behind the agreement—the maintenance of the ethnic character of the South Tyrol—then the present text was quite adequate. The history of its execution proved the correctness of this view, for lawyers again and again referred to the text to establish violations of one point or another.

During the Paris negotiations we were seriously concerned about dispelling the fears of the Eastern bloc. We could not, of course, deny the supposition that it would now be easier for us to remain a free and democratic state. This question played an important part in a conversation I had with the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Vyshinsky at the Russian Embassy. We discussed Austro-Soviet

relations at length and especially the question of German assets. Even if we did not reach any directly practical results, the talk at least helped to improve the atmosphere considerably. For the first time it became possible to reveal realistically to the Soviets our own point of view. The discussion passed off pleasantly: Vyshinsky knew how to relieve the tension of even the most violent dispute with a humorous comment. When we parted he said: 'Next time I hope we shall have less ticklish problems to discuss!'

In the meantime, the view gaining more and more ground amongst the Americans, who were themselves quite ready for an understanding, was that it would be difficult to conclude practical agreements with the Soviet Union. But the American people in this respect had not yet struggled through to any unified viewpoint.

The difficulties in the relations between Moscow and Washington do not only lie in the complete opposition of their political institutions and aims. They are also firmly fixed in their different temperaments. The Russian is hesitant, careful and patient. 'He loves width and breadth', as Gogol says in *Dead Souls*. His methods of negotiation are alien to the dynamic bustling spirit of the modern business world. They have their roots far more in the age-old customs and manners of an Eastern market-place. The Russians hate to make a firm offer. Their tactics in negotiation are to lean back and say 'No' until their opponent's patience is all but exhausted and he is willing to make concessions.

They are never anxious to put their cards on the table and seldom regard an opponent's offer as honest and never as his last. If the Russian is offered a hundred, he is convinced that at a hundred and fifty the deal will be concluded. If he is told that the offer is final, he will see in it nothing more than a subtle move. As for the rest, the Russian lives within the concepts of oriental thought: haste in negotiation is an evil, matters are never urgent.

Could there be a greater difference than between the Russian and the American negotiator? The American has a horror of such hesitant, groping bargaining. His ideal is to reach a quick and precise agreement. Then he unhesitatingly gets down to organisation and work. To negotiate at all is for the American clearly a waste of time. Construction, organisation and achievement seem

to him to be the only values that count. The watchword is to push ahead. The collision of these two temperaments, one actively and one passively strong, complicates things far beyond the natural conflict of interests.

At Paris I also met Senators Vandenberg and Connally and was surprised by the sincere sympathy they had for Austria. This made it easier for me to discuss in detail an crucial political problem, that of the Austrian state treaty. Byrnes and his collaborators promised me that at the next session of the Council of Foreign Ministers they would insist that this be put on the agenda at once. They kept their promise.

We hoped that the conference would be persuaded unanimously or at least by a large majority to instruct the Council of Foreign Ministers to conclude the treaty immediately and thereby restore to Austria her freedom. British officials advised us strongly against this. In this way they said we would only impede the quick settlement of our problems. As we could hardly achieve anything against the wishes of the major powers we finally allowed ourselves to be dissuaded.

After our experience in Paris it proved vital to come to grips fundamentally with the problem of our foreign policy. Explanations in Parliament alone were not enough. The Austrian thesis had to be expounded in an independent, untrammelled, speeches and articles. The debate in Parliament lasted into 1947.

In the often very animated interchanges I told deputies that although the United States and ourselves had a common interest in opposing Communist expansion, the Austrian Government was not proposing to hand over to experts from Washington the political and economic organization of its state. But I denied that the great powers could withdraw to within their own boundaries and allow a sort of neutral middle realm to emerge, thereby creating the pre-condition of Austria's continued existence. Neutrality was a mere word and had to mean, in the answer to all our problems.

'The mistake lies in thinking that this middle position can be the cause of harmony between the great powers and thus result. It is not Austrian neutrality that can bind together powers separated

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by world-wide differences; but agreement between these world powers can create the conditions enabling small states such as Austria to hold back from any one-sided choice.<sup>1</sup>

Turning to internal affairs, I said the constitution of 1929 was the defence of our way of life. No deviation from it would be allowed. I demanded that 'all the attempts by "democratic fronts" and unconstitutional advisers to win influence in public affairs must be rejected'.

I also denied the suggestions of fellow-travellers that the conduct of Austrian foreign policy would be eased by any such deviation. 'A power which demands this as the basis of its foreign policy will certainly not be content with tit-bits. They will merely whet its appetite, and any accommodation will only unloose new demands.' The social order must not be sacrificed to the tactical needs of foreign policy.

As for the offers of foodstuffs made to us by our neighbours, I pointed out how small they were, and commented: 'The pigs offered have multiplied considerably on their journey from our neighbours' lists to the columns of the *Volksstimme*.' But how many calories will you get from paper pigs?' I asked.

The Communist *Österreichisches Tagebuch* answered: 'On the eve of his recent departure for Paris Dr Gruber expounded to the public his conception of an Austrian foreign policy. . . . We now have it in black and white. We can anticipate and even quote how Dr Gruber's exchange of views with his fellow-statesmen will ensue.

Putting on one side the generalities and insignificant rhetoric, Austria's foreign policy, according to Dr Gruber, looks like this:

1. Neutrality would be desirable but it is not possible.
2. As Austria must take sides with one of the two great powers involved in an ideological conflict, then she takes sides with the United States (and thereby against the Soviet Union).
3. This position is based on the genuine community of interest between Austria and the United States in the prevention of a violent expansion of Communism.

<sup>1</sup> Chief organ of the Austrian Communist Party.



At this point one of Dr Gruber's fellow-statesmen might object that Austria could also take up the position of a friendly neighbour.

To this he will reply: "What does a friendly government mean? If in the last resort it does not give in to every kind of pressure, then it will be swept away by the forces of a great power!"

*Pravda* of 5th October 1947 was even coarser. 'Gruber's impudence . . .' it began, and continued, 'the praises of prominent American tourists have begun to turn Gruber's head. In Bregenz and Innsbruck the Austrian Foreign Minister has made belligerent speeches, expressing his dissatisfaction with the actions of the Soviet occupation authorities in relation to former German assets in Austria. It appears that he opposes handing over to the Soviet Union, on account of German reparations, those Austrian undertakings which belonged to the Germans.'

His speeches contain nothing but anti-Soviet attacks *à la* Goebbels, slanders on the Soviet occupation authorities and dirty insinuations against the people's democracies of Eastern Europe. This is all the more significant, for the official representative of the British Foreign Ministry -- according to Reuters -- welcomed Gruber's declaration on German assets in Austria.

Looking back, one is easily inclined to underestimate the importance of such a fundamental debate. But in the years 1946 and 1947 and even until 1948 there was a not inconsiderable section of public opinion that considered it possible to conclude with the Soviet Union a political agreement that would allow us to look to her for support and still remain a free democracy. Only the Czech upheaval put an end to this ideological confusion. What I had often prophesied now actually took place: even the most far-reaching Eastern orientation would never restrain the Communists from seizing power at the right moment. The exact contrary was the case. A 'people's democratic regime' will never acknowledge neutrality but will ultimately demand complete subordination.

Diplomacy could not rest during these weeks of debate. The Soviet Union opposed most violently any mention of the South Tyrol agreement in the Italian peace treaty. We had to be constantly on guard lest the Western powers use this diversionary activity as an excuse to omit the agreement from the treaty. We

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used our time in the main to influence American public opinion. The detailed account of the problem was not withheld from any visiting Congressman or journalist, of whom there were not a few in 1946 and 1947—including a delegation from the American Publishers Association and numerous political columnists—amongst others Joseph and Stewart Alsop, Anne O'Hare McCormick, John Gunther, Walter Lippmann, Drew and Leon Pearson and James Restor

It is worthy of note that the very people who today find fault with Austria's weak position are the ones who left us in the lurch during our greatest need. It is mostly the same people who looked on indifferently when the country was steered into the war that was the cause and origin of our present difficult position.

But it must be generally acknowledged that although Austria has so far still not acquired the status of a free country—despite the fact that she was dragged into war against her will—she is today in a better overall political position than many of her neighbours. This small country, situated in the border zone of the cold war, has been able to maintain its far-reaching sovereignty and preserve her frontiers and her unity in the face of constant occupation and strong outside pressure.

To be sure, in 1945 Austria did not succeed in regaining the German-speaking areas lost after the First World War. That is a most painful loss. But justice requires the recognition that in 1945 Italy suffered just as much or even more as the result of a severe peace treaty which not only robbed her of all her colonial possessions but also of important parts of her metropolitan territory.

If Austrian policy had lacked insight into the global political situation and, by insisting on its demands, had missed the only available opening at the Paris Conference of Foreign Ministers, then there would not have been the slightest chance in the foreseeable future of protecting both the rights of the South Tyroleans and their territorial interests, such as the Paris agreement did make possible.

These compelling thoughts must determine one's view of Austrian foreign policy. The maintenance of the policy of cutting off one's nose to spite one's face, of the 'either-or' could not

have brought about any solution at all. It would not have been able to safeguard even the most elementary interests of the South Tyrol. Much was gained where all might have been lost. The Paris agreement undoubtedly introduced a change into South Tyrolean affairs, a change of which the results not only benefit the region itself but are also not without significance for the development of Europe as a whole.

## Chapter Five



# The United States Intervenes

I owed it to a visit from Mrs Helen Reid, President of the *New York Herald Tribune* publishing company, that I was able to continue our efforts at influencing and informing American public opinion, for it was she who invited me to speak on behalf of Austria at the *Herald Tribune* 'Forum'. The invitation also offered a convenient opportunity for being in New York during the coming meeting of Foreign Ministers.

On 20th October I flew to New York with my wife. The Austrian envoy, Dr Klenwächter, who met us at La Guardia airport, had found us excellent accommodation on the twenty-sixth floor of the Hotel del Monico. We were newcomers to America and what particularly impressed us were the taps for ice water as well as those for hot and cold water. We very soon learned that ice is as much a part of American life as rolls are of a Viennese meal. We wondered at first why all their iced drinks did not turn the Americans into a nation of stomach sufferers. But later we ourselves would refuse drinks without the regulation ice cubes.

There was little time to marvel at such novelties. An endless series of visits had to be made, which completely took up the few days we spent in New York. They enabled us to discuss Austrian and European problems in detail with industrial leaders, politicians and diplomats. Dinner parties ended as a matter of course with a ten-minute talk on our problems and this was generally followed by an animated discussion.

All this left me little time to prepare my speech for the 'Forum'. We had brought from Vienna a finished draft but it proved to be much too long for my speaking-time of only eight minutes. Mrs Reid said she would allow me a minute or two longer but no more, for the lecture was being broadcast over different radio systems. I was at first very upset. Although I did not have the reputation of being a long-winded speaker, it seemed to me quite impossible

to discuss the problem of Austria inside eight minutes. But the enforced compression proved to be uncommonly instructive and useful. It taught me that even in eight minutes you can say what you have to say — which is incomparably more effective than long-windedness, however detailed. After much perspiration and a five-fold revision we ultimately had a text ready that more or less lasted the prescribed time when checked against a stop-watch.

We were now ready to take the plunge. I had never before spoken in a foreign language to an audience of four thousand such as was assembled in the great ballroom of the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria. I was also a little overawed at the competition I had to face. There were eight speakers including such important personalities in American public life as General Eisenhower, Averell Harriman, Secretary of Commerce, and Walter Lippmann, the publicist. Amongst the non-Americans were Jan Masaryk, Philip Noel-Baker, the British Minister of State, and Leon Jouhaux, the French trade union leader. All were public figures of international standing. Masaryk had preceded me on the rostrum with an extremely skilful speech. When he said in genuine American: 'We are just like you folks', he was certain of applause.

I refused to be worried and calmly stepped on to the rostrum. Following both my natural inclination and Austrian custom, I kissed Mrs Reid's hand, which seemed to please the many women present. Mrs Reid could not have chosen friendlier or more apt words to introduce my speech. They made it much easier for me and the Forum listened to my remarks with great attention and applauded enthusiastically. General Eisenhower leant over to me and said in a friendly tone: 'Jolly good speech!' I left the Forum convinced that a blow had been struck for Austria.

Our reception in Washington was generous and cordial. Although President Truman generally received only heads of government, I was enabled to have an interview with him. This was obviously a gesture to show that the United States looked on Austria as a liberated and not as a conquered country. I was, though the visit was only formal, I was none the less impressed by the President's friendly sentiments towards Austria, by his innate humanity and sound judgement.

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In the meantime the American Government went ahead and decided on an important diplomatic step that was to improve our position considerably. For some time the European division of the State Department had been busy working out a declaration that would grant Austria the status of a friendly country. This was the first really constructive step in the policy of a great power towards Austria, although a significant interlude had delayed its actual completion. When the State Department canvassed London and Paris on the proposed declaration, the former made known its opposition and nightly telephone calls were required to settle various differences of opinion. Behind the scenes it was whispered that the British wanted the Austrian question soft pedalled. Nevertheless, on 25th October 1946, on the occasion of my visit to President Truman the State Department eventually published the declaration. It stated that

In order to clarify the attitude of the U.S. Government in this matter, the U.S. Government recognises Austria for all purposes, including legal and administrative, as a liberated country comparable in status to other liberated areas and entitled to the same treatment, subject only to the controls reserved to the occupying powers in the new agreement on control machinery in Austria of June 28th, 1946.

Pointing to our record the declaration added that in the United States view this was adequate reason for all members of the United Nations to regard Austria as a liberated country.

On this basis, quite a different drift could be made of the Austrian state treaty, which was at that time in the course of preparation. It also put the relationship between Austria and the occupying powers on a new legal basis. Today, perhaps, these facts may appear self-evident. But in 1946, when not a few critics and journalists still looked on Austria as an appendage of Nazi Germany and hence deserving of punishment, the declaration signified a decisive turning point.

It was also possible to learn further details of the State Department's intentions regarding the state treaty and the inclusion of the South Tyrol agreements in the Italian peace treaty. In regard

to both I was able to make concrete proposals for improvement. Important economic problems, material aid for Austria, an improvement in the control machinery—all these were the subject of further talks with the State Department.

When these were over, we set off for the West Coast where we had an extensive lecture tour of Californian universities to carry out. After an uneventful flight we landed late at night at Los Angeles, where General Denoy greeted us in the name of the city. In Los Angeles at least, we felt gratefully, Austria was reckoned a civilised nation, and not included amongst the doubtful former enemies of the United States. Our stay in California was an experience that could hardly have been surpassed in variety. The University of Southern California conferred on Kleinwachter and myself the honorary doctorate of law. Until the last minute we had no clear idea of what was in store for us. We were assembled in the Rector's room, when a friendly professor came in, draped black gowns round each of us and put mortar-balls on our heads. Surrounded by countless students we walked through the crowded campus to a room of open air stage.

I was asked to deliver a speech of which I had only a hurriedly prepared script. I began to read it but soon dried up, whereupon I threw away the manuscript and began to speak spontaneously about Austria. The rather gloomy faces of the students brightened up and when I told the story of the four cows I had the audience completely on my side. A peasant who owns four cows is another peasant while the difference is between socialism, communism and national socialism. Peasant number two answers, 'that's very easy. When they come and take away one cow, it's socialism. When they come and take away all four cows, it's communism. But when they leave you all four cows but come every day to milk them, then it's national socialism.' The story had such an outstanding success as a graphic example of national socialism in practice (and of state capitalism) that I used it again in all my later speeches in the United States.

The President of the University, Rufus von Kleinschmidt, spoke next. I heard so many nice things about myself I almost wished the earth would open and swallow me up. I hoped they would not

accuse me in Austria of irresponsible boasting. We were tired but very happy when we returned home, bearing the symbol of our new dignity, the yellow-red hood of the legal faculty of the University of Southern California.

In the two hour interval that followed while our hosts were taking a siesta, we hurried to Santa Monica to plunge with all speed into the Pacific. On our return, we were honorary guests at the football match between the University and Portland, Oregon. We had never seen a game of this kind before. Not only did the events on the actual playing-field fascinate us but even more so those that took place round us. The spectacle opened with a march round the arena by twelve bands from the different colleges each led by three pretty college girls. The bands dressed in loud, bright clothes, entertained us on their gleaming silver and gold instruments. While all this was going on, cheer leaders were shouting orders to the students who used their decorated shields to form signs and slogans inside the seated ranks of spectators. Aeroplanes circled over the playing fields trailing long streamers bearing such slogans as Buy Coco Ice or Come to next Sunday's bullfight in Mexico. The spectacle was so confusing that we hardly knew whether to laugh or cry. In the end, like the hundred thousand others, we threw our hats into the air and plunged into the spirit of the afternoon. President Kleinsmid leaned over to me and said: 'You see how sport consumes the superfluous energies of our young people. It keeps them away from stupid political disputes. And that was true enough.'

The difference in outlook between the continental European and the American is especially evident in their respective attitude to nature. Almost all Europeans have a deeply implanted feeling for the beauty of a landscape. But what interests the American more is, generally speaking, in event, whether in sport or in nature, organisation, the way men live, the way they look at things, technical construction and the practical things of life. The American, as a result, seldom goes for a walk, he prefers to play golf, ride or punt. Only in recent years has hiking become a form of relaxation, in the wake of skiing perhaps, which has also become a mass sport.



This psychological attitude may originate perhaps in the difference of the territories each inhabits. Europe resembles a handwoven tapestry, industriously pieced together by its inhabitants over hundreds, even thousands of years. Every corner breathes history and tradition, almost every turn of the road reveals a different district, with different customs, with its local architectural style, and often even a new landscape. But what Europe lacks are great natural reserves.

America, on the other hand, is a country of space, and by European standards a virgin country. Her short history, her relative uniformity of custom, her revolutionary building style, the domination of the functional—all these indeed do not satisfy one to the same extent as would a journey across Europe. But America has virgin soil in abundance, almost empty spaces of an often primeval dignity.

San Francisco is undoubtedly the most European town in the United States. The pleasantly rattling tramways in themselves recall a European city. The main purpose of our visit was to lecture at the Universities of Berkeley and Stanford. President Robert Sproul of Berkeley received us most cordially. I was looking forward particularly to lecturing there for very many Americans of the 103rd Division, the Cactus Division, which had been the first to enter the Tyrol, were studying in these Universities. Amongst the professors there were also some former Austrians. An animated discussion and a very friendly mood developed. Once, when I forgot the appropriate English word in my lecture, the audience simply shouted it up at me.

In the evening there was the usual press conference. The Californian journalists were more interested in personal experiences than anything else. So I told them how important it was to disappear during the first two days of a revolution because by then the worst dangers are mostly over. To my astonishment the next day's papers carried only a little of our political comment but instead two column headlines: 'Gruber says: one must disappear the first forty-eight hours after a revolution.'

My last lecture of the tour was at Harvard University and this was certainly the most animated of the lot as American and Austrian

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Communists had decided to interfere with the tour. After the lecture they asked every tricky question possible. One Communist spoke for fully four minutes, ending up belligerently. 'Do you think that after the occupation is ended Austria will remain a democratic country?' I stood up, said 'yes' and calmly sat down again. The audience clapped loudly - evidently the shorter an answer was, the better they liked it.

An important diplomatic task lay in wait for us on our return to New York - contacting the conference of Foreign Ministers in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. It was meeting in the midst of extraordinary security precautions. Because of the Palestine crisis the 'Stern gang' had made all sorts of threats against the life of Mr Bevin and Jewish organisations were permanently picketing the hotel. To reach the conference-rooms one had to go up in one lift, then change, come down in another and finally pass a check-point before being admitted.

We had two objectives to achieve. First, we wanted the Austrian state treaty put on the agenda by the next conference of Foreign Ministers, second, we wanted the South Tyrol agreement included in the Italian peace treaty. We were eventually successful on both counts, the South Tyrol agreement being included in an appendix to the peace treaty. As for the Austrian state treaty, special deputies of the Foreign Ministers were appointed to begin their consultations in London on 12th January 1947.

## The State Treaty: Phase One

The original draft of the state treaty prepared by the U.S. State Department was a fairly faithful copy of the Hungarian peace treaty. (At the same time, it confirmed our frontiers and rejected any obligation to pay reparations—in contrast to the other peace treaties.) The only difference was the name 'state treaty' instead of 'peace treaty'. In a note to the Government of the United States from which the principal draft had emerged, we suggested that the treaty should only be concerned with ending the occupation of Austria. All other questions—the property of members of the United Nations, German property, state debts, patents and so on—should be settled by the Federal Government through special treaties outside the state treaty. This would have made a short treaty of evacuation possible and a free Austria would then easily have been able to settle the outstanding economic questions with the states concerned. Where German assets were concerned, Austrian laws should apply.

Neither in Washington nor in London or Paris did our initiative meet with approval. The draft treaties drawn up by Britain and France both contained resolutions providing for full compensation for the destruction of Allied property. This would have relegated Austria in practice to the status of one of the principal aggressors. We drew up an effective programme to fight this impossible proposal. Finally, with the help of British and French public opinion we defeated the demand for compensation.

The French also made the grotesque suggestion that a permanent disarmament commission of four members be established—which would have meant including the Russians—with the aim of preventing the rearmament of Austria. The proposal included a whole list of limitations on the future Austrian army. It banned, for example, every sort of research, development and experimental activity with the following products and armaments: laminating

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rollers with an effective breadth of one metre, hauling and rolling frames with a strength of more than 100 tons in steel works or steel factories, calculating machines, except for those used ordinarily in commerce and mathematical instruments, and so on.

Britain contributed one item to this list—the stipulation that the range of Austrian guns should not exceed thirty kilometres, which is approximately the width of the English Channel at its narrowest point.

The French military used this nonsense on the fact that it must be made impossible for Germany to use Austria as an armaments base. If it was indeed one of the principles of French policy to keep Austria separate from Germany, then it was completely nonsensical to forbid Austria the possession of the necessary armaments, not to speak of the need to defend the country against attacks from other directions. If on the other hand Germany again became strong enough to rearm, then she was also strong enough to do this on her own soil rather than in Austria.

Not surprisingly, the Soviet Union jumped with joy at this French proposal and gave it unconditional approval. But the day was to come when the French delegation would see the Soviet Union drop its support for a four power disarmament commission, and leave the French isolated.

It was under these auspices that the London conference opened in January 1947. The Austrian delegation whose members were attending in the capacity of observers travelled in a body to London. What can a small state do to defend its interests successfully at an international conference? The most important preconditions are the good presentation of its case, correct statistics, well-arranged evidence and hard hitting arguments. In the last resort, a state must never allow itself to be pushed on to the defensive. In international affairs it is almost always possible to talk as much of the failures of an opponent as of one's own failures. We made good use of this recipe in the case of Yugoslavia. But a diplomatic counter attack must take a form which does not seem overbearing or hurtful. After sharp attacks particularly, it is always important to end up with a conciliatory formula, making it clear that one has merely acted in defence of one's own point of view.

One's own interests must always be ranked in the order of their importance. There are certain basic questions where there must be no doubt that one will never give one's assent. In regard to our frontiers, for example, we consistently rejected all attempts at revising them in favour of Yugoslavia or Czechoslovakia. The phrase 'the Austrian frontiers are inviolable and we will never consent to any change' sounded very sharp when the conference began but probably it was only this inviolable attitude, akin to a veto, that saved our frontiers. As to such Austria cannot throw its military or economic strength on to the scales. But it can very well assert its position in itself and thus acquire an important potential accession of strength. Such diplomatic manoeuvres are of the utmost delicacy and must be executed with care. Their possible consequences demand the most careful consideration, lest they backfire.

The first London conference brought forth a heavy skirmishing with the Yugoslavs over Carinthia. But not until months later did this turn into the pivot of the whole Austrian problem. We began by drawing up a basic introduction to the treaty giving an expose of the Moscow declaration from our own point of view, and drafting the political and military clauses of the state treaty. The discussion of frontier problems was postponed. Only unimportant economic problems were discussed as the difficult hurdle of German assets had first to be surmounted.

In Vienna we had arranged for the first fundamental declaration on the state treaty to be made by our Chancellor himself, in the presence of the Vice-Chancellor. As soon as the conference had fixed the date of the first Austrian hearing both of them joined us in London for a week.

Our parliamentary group of participants gave us some trouble. Up till now we had arranged for a daily reading of the current Austrian declaration to be made in the Legation buildings. This enabled the Members of Parliament to raise whatever objections they had, although they were generally in agreement with our moves. Even Fischer, the Communist, was (at first) content with our prepared texts.

• At the conference itself we obviously could not demand a break

after every question to discuss it inside the delegation. That is the very reason for appointing Ministers for Foreign Affairs, who constitutionally enjoy the right of speaking in the name of their country and safeguard a united attitude as to the outside world.

We went in a body to the meeting place of the conference in Lancaster House. The representatives of the four powers, each with their delegates and their experts were seated at the celebrated round table. We took up similar positions and Chancellor Egl then read his declaration. After it had been translated I submitted and explained the Austrian memorandum. The ensuing phase of question and answer was much stormier than we had expected.

The representatives of the Western powers contented themselves with formal questions. But Gousev, the Russian Ambassador, wanted to know considerably more, especially where German assets were concerned. Here is an extract from the Conference protocol:

Mr Gousev then referred to the Potsdam Declaration and the decision taken there in respect to German assets in Eastern Austria. He wanted to know whether the Austrian Government recognised this decision which he said was primarily a political one. He did not intend to go into the detailed economic implications yet.

Lord Hood (the British delegate) pointed out that the Potsdam Declaration referred not only to Eastern Austria but to the Western Zones also.

Mr Gruber said: (1) that under Article 5 of the Control Agreement the Austrian Government were forbidden to take any measures in connection with German assets without written orders from the Control Commission; (2) the Austrian Government had not recognised the Potsdam Declaration because it had not been addressed to them. Until they received, firstly, orders that the Potsdam Declaration should be applied and secondly, elucidation by the Commission as to what action was required, the Austrian Government could do nothing; (3) Mr Gruber

agreed that the question of German assets was primarily political, and drew attention to two of his annexes. Annex 1 proposed a clause to fulfil the intention of the London Declaration of 1943 that Austrian property should not serve reparations.

General Clark (the United States delegate) said that all were aware of the importance of settling the questions of German assets. Although the Control Agreement had received unanimous assent, his Soviet colleague on the Commission had always prevented discussion on this question with the result that there had been no decisions which could be communicated to the Austrian Government.

I immediately translated every question to our delegation adding the answer I had ready. My colleagues very correctly saw that no one without a detailed knowledge of the treaties and their legal content could make any contribution at all to the discussion.

The international press carried the conference discussions in grant headlines more or less to the effect that Gousev had failed to put pressure on the Austrian delegation. We had defended ourselves skilfully and bravely, the papers said. Despite these reports it would be unwarranted to assume that our relations with the Soviet delegation were not cordial. On the contrary, I visited Gousev very frequently at the Soviet Embassy and also had various conversations with his military adviser about the state treaty.

Later in the conference certain sections of the treaty, such as political and military clauses, became clearer. The French proposals, which we naturally fought to the uttermost, were left open. At first, the strength of the Austrian police (in towns and cities) and gendarmes (in the countryside) caused difficulties. The American draft, based on the Hungarian draft, reckoned with 60,000 men, including the gendarmes. The Soviets, on the other hand, were only willing to allow us 30,000. This strength had been laid down in the Treaty of St Germain in 1919, without, indeed, including the gendarmes. The Russian representative, a colonel, constantly referred to this treaty, making much play with historical examples, to prove that Austria did not need more than an executive force of 30,000. In the end the Western military advisers

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demanded that I appear before their committee to clear up this question I naturally advocated the higher figure. A total of 53,000 police and gendarmieric and 5,000 air personnel was eventually approved.

The Soviet attitude to the Austrian Army had undergone a change similar to that of our diplomatic relations with the Soviets. When the Russians entered Austria in 1945 and the first provisional government, in which the Communists held leading positions, was appointed, there was even an Under Secretary of State for Defence, Lieutenant Colonel Winterer. Chancellor Renner promoted him to Major General—all this, of course, with the tacit concurrence of the Soviets. It obviously copied the model of events in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria where the Soviets accepted the capitulation of forces which by agreement with the governments concerned, they then used against the Germans. This example in itself showed the cold blooded expediency of the Soviets in the promotion of their political aims or as the case might be their revolutionary tactics. But it also showed the pitiful effect inevitably produced by the short sighted emotional policy of the Western powers.

The verbal disputes at the conference between the Yugoslavs and ourselves over Carinthia became more tense. Yugoslavia had no ethnic justification for her claims and therefore made tactical use of the allegation of Austrian co-responsibility for the war in order to punish us by securing reparation payments, and particularly to cut off South Carinthia from Austria. The first Yugoslav proposals made such exorbitant and exaggerated territorial demands that they could hardly serve at all as a basis for their claims. In fact, they not only demanded several frontier villages but also Klagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia, which they renamed Celovec.

We had with us the Governor of Carinthia, Hans Piesch, to represent the province. But he was not able to defend himself with any particular skill. When attacked at a press conference, because power had allegedly been transferred to him by a Nazi who had resigned, he did not calmly reject the allegation but entered into a wearisome debate. He made it easy for the astute journalists of the Eastern bloc to find gaps in his chain of argument. The result of this unhappy press conference was the Yugoslav demand, which



we rejected of course, that Piesch be banned from taking any further part in the Lancaster House discussions. Soon afterwards he returned home and was dismissed from his post, without any more questions on the matter being put to us.

We countered Yugoslav accusations that Austrian troops had caused every conceivable kind of destruction by proving that Austrian troops as such had not existed but only Austrians forced to serve with German divisions. Then we went over to the counter-attack and in the conduct of the various Croatian, Serbian and Slovene Governments found enough material to prove that these had treated their own countrymen with particular cruelty. We could even show that numerous Russian volunteer regiments had fought in Yugoslavia and were clearly responsible for many of the atrocities attributed to us.

In spite of our skirmishes at the conference table our personal relations with the Yugoslavs were not at all bad. One day when we ran out of writing paper we sent a secretary to the Yugoslav Legation across the street to ask if they could help us out, which they did most generously. So by a strange coincidence, our reply to the Yugoslav demands was actually penned on Yugoslav paper.

Despite these opening clashes the frontier question pined more and more into the background for it was soon clear that the problem of German assets would give rise to far greater difficulties. The Soviets held the view that all German assets in Austria had already been promised to them by the Potsdam Agreement of 1945. And for them everything that had been German in 1945 was considered German assets. What they might be prepared to hand over of these, could only be determined in direct talks between Austria and the Soviet Union, and depended in the first resort on the latter's generosity. But legally the Soviets were not committed to anything. This view was utterly nonsensical for in 1945, legally speaking, all the railways and roads, schools and customs houses—in short, all the possessions of the State—had belonged to the Germans.

The Western view was that a general claim had indeed arisen through the Potsdam Agreement, but that its fulfilment must be the subject of Four-power agreements. In defining German property



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In Austria, account must be taken of the London declaration of 5th January 1943 which declared null and void the forcible seizure of property assets by Germany.

Between these two viewpoints a political and legal struggle flared up that was to drag on for months and even years. The Anglo-Saxon lawyers finally worked out a subtle formula whereby all German assets belonged to the Soviet Union in so far as they had not been acquired by the Germans through force or duress. A Russian expert commented ironically: 'Nobody can rape his own wife.' We soon reached deadlock. The whole affair was postponed until the next conference of Foreign Ministers in Moscow.

Apart from the formidable Yugoslav claim to Southern Carinthia we were also faced with the Czech demand for the cession of smaller strips of territory along the rivers Danube, March and Thaya. The reason given was the construction of the Oder-Danube canal. But behind the Czech claim there was undoubtedly the attempt to bring the canal exclusively under Czechoslovak sovereignty, and in particular to bring its mouth under Czech control. This would have meant the canal losing its status as an international waterway. Nor could we rid ourselves of the suspicion that the demand for an additional strip of territory south of the Danube sprang from the strategic plans of the Czech General Staff.

No one should suppose that when we rejected these claims we enjoyed the immediate and unconditional support of the Western powers. On the contrary, in the immediate post-war period—the era of illusions, we called it—we were constantly being advised to come to an understanding with the Eastern bloc in these matters. Now, despite my warnings, the deputies decided to send us a document inviting the Czechs and ourselves to settle the dispute by bilateral negotiations.

An invitation of this kind may not seem to have much legal importance, but somehow it always establishes the existence of a dispute to be settled. Faced with this situation, we emphasised the inviolability of our frontiers. We told the Czechs that we were ready for negotiations but only on the basis of exchanging a strip

of territory on the March about three hundred metres wide against a corresponding territorial compensation along the Thaya. But we firmly refused to cede any Austrian territory south of the Danube.

Bilateral talks at the request of the Czechs were eventually opened in Vienna. But the Czechs had soon to realise that they would never reach their goal in this way. They were constantly trying to use underground contact. Their first Ambassador in Vienna, Count Borck Dohalsky, was friendly with many Austrian politicians, with whom he had been in a concentration camp. Speculation and rumours of supposed compromise plans, Austrian concessions and the like soon filled the air. We had little sympathy with such backstairs negotiations. The Czechs had to be made to realise that nothing could be achieved without our explicit co-operation. A certain economic pressure soon made itself felt when the evident shortage of goods, particularly of foodstuffs, hurt many in Austria, department for the various promises of support to the Czechs in the hope of securing better trading conditions. But my irrevocable principle was that economic difficulties are of a temporary nature and can therefore be overcome. Hence political and territorial concessions are often enough permanent.

During the months long negotiations the political attitude of the Western powers changed to such an extent that they decided to drop their support for the Czech demands. It may well be ascribed to the personal intervention of Masaryk that the Czechs did not broach the question again but quietly put it on the shelf.

The London conference did not of course solve all the main problems presented by the treaty. But at least enough was done to justify us in speaking of a final draft, even though we had to leave many problems unsettled.

The conference also brought the first disputes with the Yugoslavs, as I have mentioned earlier. The clarity, consistency and determination with which we defended our position from the start did not fail to make its impact on the decisions of the four powers and, what was at least as important, on the public opinion of their respective countries.

An immediate hard hitting answer at the conference table is

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naturally only possible if one's archives are well organised. At the height of our debate with the Yugoslavs the interchange of arguments often lasted five and even seven hours. There was no time in the intervals to draft a reply. An opponent's remarks must be noted down without delay and the main lines of your answer must be determined the moment you begin to reply. Sitting immediately behind us we always had an archivist who had to be able to produce in a few minutes from his enormous files any documents or statistics we required. I never attended a hearing in fact before I had at least flicked through the index to the documents so that I knew where the most important ones were located.

Our main task, however, was to have these draft answers, documents and statistics arrived in battle order so that there could be no confusion when one began to reply. After all there is no time to make corrections lest one gives the impression of being a bungler with a weak case. Even without overestimating in any way the effect of conference speeches it never fails to make an impression if an argument can be firmly contradicted on the spot, with corroborating statistics. The hearings were the most animated moments of the conference.

When the London conference ended we could be well content with the results of our efforts. Little had been decided that endangered our vital interests. As against this we had averted many proposals that might have become most unpleasant. And when one recalls that even those powers on whom we thought we could rely for support, had come to the conference without any clear policy, that every line of their draft treaties breathed the spirit of the war and that we first had to explain to them how such an absurd outlook obviously harmed their own interests as much as ours, we had, despite everything, made considerable progress.

To the Soviets, as also to their Yugoslav allies we had made it clear that we had no intention of allowing ourselves to be intimidated and were firmly and unshakably resolved to hold fast to certain principles.

Before our return to Vienna we arranged a small farewell party. To our astonishment even Fischer, the Communist delegate, rose

to congratulate us. We hastened to write down his golden words; we were fairly sure that never again would the Cominform permit Fischer such heresy.

At the invitation of General Mark Clark I returned to Vienna in his personal 'Flying Fortress'. New questions and problems lay in wait for us.

## Deadlock in Moscow

Very early on the morning of 25th March 1947 we flew eastwards from Bad Vöslau, the Soviet airport in Austria: Moscow was the goal. We hoped that in our capacity as observers we would be able to make our influence felt at the forthcoming conference of Foreign Ministers. During the journey we could see the muddy lakes of the spring floods extending from the Austrian frontier to the foot of the Carpathians and beyond over the whole of the broad Hungarian plain. The Beskid mountains were covered with snow and overhung with clouds. At times we flew so low that it almost seemed possible to touch the storm-tossed pine trees. Beyond the Beskids we could see in the far distance the huge glare of Struj, the Galician oilfield, where gas or oil was burning. We followed the route on maps spread out on our knees.

The weather took a turn for the worse and low clouds forced the pilot to lose height but the Carpathians were now behind us so we were not over-worried. We soon realised that we must have deviated quite considerably from our route and it was not long before we landed on a deserted airfield at Lemberg in Galicia. We spent a few hours waiting at the airfield before we were told that we would have to spend a night there until the weather improved. We later heard of a rumour going the rounds in Vienna that we had made an emergency landing at Kursk, some three hundred miles south of Moscow. Friend and foe thought this the first stop on the way to Siberia. In the meantime a representative of the town commandant of Lemberg gave us a warm welcome and led us to the local Intourist Hotel. It was certainly not a lack of courtesy on the part of Soviet officials that made us curse our fate. The universal shortages, the war and the frequent change of administration had transformed this once thriving old Austrian town into a desolate spot. The food itself was not so bad, but our bedrooms left everything to be desired. The bedclothes had obviously not

been changed for weeks and the water supply and other toilet necessities were in a deplorable condition. There were no curtains and underneath our window an enormous loudspeaker bawled political slogans at least until midnight. But the lack of cleanliness upset us most of all. My ministerial colleague Dr Peter Krauland looked at his bed in despair. Finally he took half a dozen handkerchiefs from his carefully packed baggage and placed them across the mattress. He swore softly as he stretched himself out.

We devoted the afternoon to a tour of the town. The poverty was simply indescribable. We saw a shop in which literally the utmost rubbish, old rusty door knobs, bicycle spokes and similar odds and ends were being sold at what seemed to us quite high prices. At the street corners the boys were sitting those warts and straws, orphaned by the war who now turned bravely into empires. At a free market we saw eggs, potatoes and a little fruit on sale at enormous prices, that is assuming the ruble-schilling exchange rate was genuine. We had seen enough of the town and climbed the hill to the old forts of Lember where we stayed until the evening sun reminded us that it was time to return. It was hardly possible to keep with the horrible noise outside our windows, so we went to the cinema opposite where the film *Kreutzer Sonata* was being shown. I could follow some of the Russian dialogue myself and our interpreter interpreted the rest to me. We felt ourselves transported back to the Nineties. The story took place in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, an American and a British admiral, the one a conventionally bearded Uncle Sam, and the other with a broad bull-dog face, are carefully engaged in betraying a bold Russian naval officer to the Japanese. But the Russian officer decides to go down with all his faith rather than fall into his enemies' clutches. He prepares to meet a hero's death. This was the sort of fare served up to us for seven years of Nazi rule. We returned home, hoping that even in Russia the loudspeakers were switched off at night.

This must have been the case. For we were able to sleep a few hours, happy in the knowledge that we could start on the next stage of our journey to Moscow. Then after hours we flew through fog, rain and snow-storms and then suddenly shot down over trees

tops on to the Moscow central airport without even having to circle round for very long. Full of hope we got out of the plane—to land in a sea of slush that more than covered our ankles. We waded, cursing, to the reception building where we were welcomed by our Minister Bischoff and members of the Russian protocol department. I was worried about being able to get a strong pair of galoshes but Bischoff assured me that these were available in excellent qualities. On the journey to town we learned that Russia in March is a vast lake of slush and snow. We wondered how people living on the outskirts of Moscow reached their place of work without sinking in the snow. How relieved we were to find at the end of our journey a sparkling clean hotel with a first-class service and excellent food! Although the windows were closed during the winter an excellent air conditioning system took care of ventilation and fresh air. The surroundings of the Kremlin—Red Square, the Square of the October Revolution, the broad asphalt roads and the huge modern residential blocks—were in such stark contrast to our experiences in Lemberg that we had to revise our first impressions.

We had unfortunately no Legation of our own in Moscow and not even Legation premises, so that we were entirely reduced to working and living in our hotel. Diplomacy conducted along hotel corridors under the eyes of curious spectators is neither easy nor relaxing. Besides, the hotel was anything but cheap. A statistician calculated that the Moscow Foreign Ministers' Conference must have cost a round million dollars. We also had to revise our idea of time: the dictionary translated the Russian word *Skor* / *ryu* as 'immediately', but it could in fact mean a day, a week or even a month.

As always, our first task was to make contact with the various delegations present. Here in Moscow it was by no means as easy as we had imagined, as none of the Western delegations dared to work in their hotel rooms. They sat in their embassies next to and almost on top of each other, like carp in a deserted pond in autumn. Six American delegates, for example, occupied a medium-sized room of their Embassy—there were Generals Clark and Clay and advisers and ambassadors such as John Foster Dulles, Ben Cohen,



**Freeman Matthews and Robert Murphy** With the different tasks, characters and outlook of these six delegates it is easy to see that their diplomatic hen-coop was no joke. The relations between the military and the career diplomats are always the touchiest. Naturally, we had to put most stress on making Congressmen and State Department officials as familiar as possible with our problems. But our task was twofold—to keep the interest and enlist the support of both the diplomats and the military—and to steer clear of any friction between the two.

The rest of the American delegates—a hundred would have been a low estimate—were cooped up in the ballroom of the Embassy, barely separated from each other by thin partitions. One needed the experience of a well-trained scout to thread one's way through the confusion of narrow passage ways to the desks of the people one was looking for. Russian microphones were the cause of this indescribable overcrowding. Outside their buildings, most delegates only conversed with each other in whispers, for all the hotel rooms were supposed to have been wired. I personally, thought this pessimism exceeded the Soviets' technical capacity.

One evening some high officials of the American delegation invited me to have dinner with them in the enormous Moskva Hotel. When I arrived some of the Americans were standing in front of a hole in the wall shouting into it all sorts of remarks. 'I much prefer Vyshinsky to Molotov. That fellow is much too rigid.' When I came through the door they asked, 'What do you think of that chip Gruber?' whereupon I thin I shouted into the hole, 'I think he's in league with the Russians.' The whole thing was naturally more of a joke than anything else. But somehow one had the feeling that it was all being written down, to be presented the next day to the SKY and Molotov, as the case might be.

In spite of constant personal contact, differences of opinion over tactics with the Western delegations were inevitable. To understand this, the background to the Moscow conference must be recalled. The illusory alliances of the immediate post-war period had withered away with the blossoming forth of the people's democracies. The upheaval in attitudes was thorough enough. In American public opinion the general view gained ground that the

Russians were cold-bloodedly and calculatingly exploiting every weakness or clumsiness revealed by the West. The first outcome of this change of mood was Truman's declaration on Greece and Turkey in 1947. This was also the first time that the policy of containment was expounded. The aim was to prevent further Communist penetration by using economic and, if necessary, military aid. A blind man could now see that we were on the eve of a period of severe tension.

In our view the Soviets were realists and always ready to recognise reality. But paper declarations are not realities for a totalitarian regime. The only things that count are armies, factories and raw materials. Therefore, given the absence of force to back up the Truman declaration, there was a danger that the Soviets would speed up their penetration of Eastern Europe and pursue a policy of *finis complis*. This would put an end for years to any chance of friendly settlements. There was bound to be a long interval between the declared intention of creating a new balance of power and its practical realisation. We hoped the Moscow conference would perhaps leave a loophole through which the Austrian treaty could be brought home before the great powers faced each other in ever more threatening attitudes.

But only a few diplomats agreed with this analysis. Most thought that the work of the four Foreign Ministers could proceed undisturbed. They even said that it would be decisively furthered by the West's firm approach. After the failure of the Moscow conference, for example, a high American official said to me: 'Don't worry, you will have your treaty at the next meeting.' This was the reason why the Western delegates were disinclined to make greater concessions to the Soviets in order to conclude the Austrian state treaty.

In the background a second point of view was influential. Doubt in the ability of Austrian democracy to live and defend itself made it appear advisable to Western politicians, and particularly to their military experts, not to embark on any risky policy. In their opinion the present situation did at least guarantee that the strategically most important part of Austria would be spared further Soviet penetration.

We considered both arguers wrong. The Austrian problem could not be seen only in relation to the Russian problem. Austria is a part of Europe and an independent Austria is a necessary precondition of European harmony. Germany plus Austria means the hegemony of Central Europe which could well jeopardise the formation of a united Europe. Austrian patriotism is not so self-evident as British or American patriotism for the state itself is the product of some absurd political decisions dating from the First World War. Since then it has been organised in accordance with constantly changing political principles and now urgently needs international co-operation and decades of undisturbed evolution.

How were we to convince Western diplomats that our interests coincided with theirs? It is quite insufficient to prepare an elaborate, professional *exposé* and then to hand this to the diplomats, either officially or unofficially. The process of the formation of international decisions is very slow and subject to countless imponderable factors. Once a decision has been made or an idea has taken root it can only be changed after years, some influence has been exerted on press and public and in lengthy conversations with people in authority. But that was our very problem. General Marshall had just become Secretary of State and, as always in such cases, new advisers came to the fore. Furthermore, we now had to deal with military diplomats whose outlook, mode of work and even vocabulary was different.

At times we had the feeling that all the Western negotiators did was to juxtapose the Soviet demands and their own and then calculate the happy medium on a fifty-fifty basis. But what this method of argument completely overlooked was that the Soviets could offer the treaty itself. That is to say, the evacuation of Austria, the evacuation of a country with a strongly anti-communist government.

The mode of work in Moscow soon began to tell on everybody's nerves. As a rule, the Deputy or the Foreign Ministers held their sessions in the afternoons. During this period we could, if we wanted, go for walks or occupy ourselves with the preparation of our draft proposals. The evening meal generally lasted several hours, for when the Russian begins anything he never hurries and

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loves to be thorough. We were amused to see our reserved seats in the restaurant always laid *a la grand diner*, from early morning till late at night. The long rows of glasses and cutlery would have done honour to any feudal lord in the Duchy of Burgundy. The food was nourishing but the lack of fresh vegetables made it monotonous.

Our real work did not begin till after supper. We would discuss the general situation, examine new proposals, and work out new solutions. Our work often lasted until four o'clock in the morning, and even until dawn, if a hearing was imminent.

On one occasion we were invited to Aviation House, where the conference was being held, to attend a hearing together with the Yugoslavs. Their spokesman had little new to say and only gave vent to propagandist insinuations against our President. Our answer was as categorical as ever: "We will not sign any treaty, unless our pre-war frontiers are recognised." Again we had to listen to many a Western reproach at this outspoken declaration.

But to our surprise Molotov showed no special interest in the frontier issue. He merely asked two questions. The first concerned the school system in Slovenia and the second old Yugoslav statistics which dated in part from 1948 and supposedly showed the formerly Slav character of Carinthia. Thanks to our careful preparations I was able in one swoop to pull from our files a pamphlet entitled *Crnje Jugoslavne geografske i historijske* who was evidently well known to the cultured Russians. At first I had some difficulty in pronouncing *Crnje* correctly until a Yugoslav called out to me across the table the correct pronunciation. This helped us, for it demonstrated that we had not dug up some unknown scholar but were able to quote a Yugoslav authority of the first rank. *Crnje* had written a work proving that whole sets of statistics from the period before the First World War were utterly false, having been prepared solely in accordance with the political views of the statistician. This applied to Slovene just as much as to German statistics. Neither had any scientific status. Molotov let it rest at that.

That afternoon we went to Klink on the Moskva-Volga canal. Hardly had we left the car than my name resounded from an enormous loudspeaker. Our translator hurriedly gave us the gist

of the broadcast. 'Mr Gruber from Vienna told the conference a pack of lies but Comrade Kardelj, the valiant Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, easily and promptly refuted them.'

We tried to leave Moscow whenever it was possible. But it was not easy to find genuine woodlands in the neighbourhood of the capital. Not until we had driven some way beyond the suburbs did that park-like, hilly landscape begin with mixed birches and pinewoods, already foreshadowing the Northern tundra. On our first expedition out of Moscow a Russian sentry at a road-block stopped our car. He indicated that we could not drive further and would have to return. Our Russian chauffeur was deeply hurt. He roared and gesticulated violently to the sentry, explaining that he could not hold up delegates to the great Moscow conference. The worthy sentry was sorely embarrassed. He stumped over to a tree to which a telephone was nailed. After lengthy ringing a dialogue followed from which we gathered that the sentry was explaining to a colleague that he had a Mr Grub from Vienna with him who wanted to drive through. Then he came back to us, grinning broadly. Mr Grub could of course drive on to wherever he liked but unfortunately a hundred yards ahead there was a deep pit in the road into which we might fall. In the interests of our own safety he asked us to turn back. We bade the sentry a cordial farewell and reached the woods we were aiming for along another route.

Theatres, concerts and the ballet in particular are on a not worthy level in Moscow. With the aid of the Foreign Office it was often possible to visit the famous Bolshoi Theatre or to see the impressive popular dance ensembles in the Tchukovsky Hall. At a personal level we missed informal contact with the population. Even contact with Soviet diplomats was infrequent. In the first weeks of our stay in Moscow the town was buried in deep snow which was swept away on the main streets by women. The normal clothing of the Russian population in winter is a thickly lined quilted jacket which does not give exactly an elegant effect. Many an American was disgusted by the appearance of these hard-working women. 'I look at these people - and you know everything about this giant poor-house' was their comment.

But there was no greater contrast than between the fine tramways and the huge, modern, American-looking buildings—and the decrepit, low-built houses of the old part of Moscow. The suburbs looked to us particularly shabby.

The journey to the old monastery of Ipat'skoye was very popular. Behind a high red brick circular wall stood almost a dozen wooden churches, entirely without order or design, as though scattered by a giant. Their twisting or winding onion-shaped domes are somehow related to our own baroque style. Masterpieces of fresco painting are to be found on their high wooden walls. A host of busy monks enlivened the monastery. For the sake of interest I asked one of them how long he had been a member of the order. One year, he answered to my surprise: the monastery had only just been reopened. When I asked what he had done previously, he said with pride that he had been a sailor in the Baltic. A foreign diplomat said maliciously that probably all the monks had been sailors—they had obviously been selected because of their fine beards. They kept strictly to their ritual and said our women-folk could not go behind the altar for this was strictly forbidden by the rules of the Orthodox church.

The Moscow churches and those in the surrounding villages were also frequently visited. The Russian Easter was just being celebrated and everywhere we could see peasants clad in large kerchiefs bringing cheese cakes to church for consecration.

The conference dragged on stupidly and fruitlessly. The moment could not be far off when it would finally collapse through the impatience of its senior members. Bidault particularly was in a hurry to return because French internal politics in his absence were once more fluid. General de Gaulle was beginning to re-emerge as the leader of a new movement.

We suggested to General Clark that the legal quibbles, into which the attempts to define German assets had degenerated, be thrown completely overboard and that we try a commercial approach worked out in Vienna. But the Americans did not yet think the matter tactically ripe. Besides they were basing all the hopes on a secret conference of Foreign Ministers which was to meet soon to put an end to the stalemate.

In the meantime, we did not omit to keep ourselves informed of Russian intentions. Molotov proved very cordial at one conversation. He advised us to settle the frontier dispute in bilateral talks with the Yugoslavs. He continued: "Russia wants nothing more than the contractual guarantee of Soviet rights resulting from the Potsdam treaty." We had the impression that the Soviets were anxious to help the conference towards success.

To delve more deeply into the Soviet readiness to make concessions I had interviews lasting several hours with Kissilev, the Russian Minister to Britain in the Moscow Foreign Office. As before, he demanded that we recognise in principle the rights of the Soviet Union. Only after such a declaration would Moscow be ready in individual cases to make concessions to us. Russia, he added, was no petty horse trader but a very generous bargainer. But we could not let ourselves in for such an uncertain transaction. If the Soviet Union were ready to clarify the whole problem of German assets, as we had suggested in January, then an agreement would have been possible without further ado.

From every point of view we no longer looked forward to the end of the conference. The confined working space in the Hotel National, the very limited circle of people, mostly foreign diplomats, with whom we could mix outside our hotel rooms, the night work, the atmosphere of political uncertainty, and the ways of Soviet Russia—all this began to make itself felt on our people in the form of nerves and irritability. In Vienna moreover, we had exaggerated the need for a knowledge of Russian and had let ourselves be misled into taking inexperienced people with us as our auxiliary personnel. We soon had to send some of them back and bring in our usual secretarial staff to keep things at all orderly. We ourselves soon learned the few Russian expressions we needed for telephoning, making purchases and arranging interviews. There were enough linguists in the hotels and in the Russian Foreign Service to make our ignorance of the language not so noticeable.

When our secretaries arrived from Vienna we were so infected by the diplomats' eternal fear of microphones that we instructed them to test our rooms by knocking on the walls. Hundreds of the airshuttles were also unscrewed and a pocket lamp attached to a cord

## ~~BETWEEN LIBERATION AND STRENGTH~~

lowered into the shaft. The result was negative. Either the Moscow engineers were super-technicians or the whole talk of microphones was nonsense.

The conference machinery ticked ever more and more slowly. If it took its normal course, no solution to our problems looked at all likely. All our hopes were concentrated on the secret meeting of Foreign Ministers. It had become clear that nothing would emerge in the discussions on the German question. The Soviets claimed huge and unfulfillable reparations deliveries from Germany despite General Marshall's statement that Germany was living on American credit and that there could be no talk of reparations until her solvency was re-established. These contradictions soon proved insoluble. Thus the theme of the secret conference was the Austrian state treaty. Molotov asked his colleagues whether a recognition of the Austrian frontiers would exclude subsequent bilateral agreements between Austria and Jugoslavia. The conference protocol reports on this point:

Mr Molotov enquired whether the acceptance of the proposal would prevent Austria and Jugoslavia coming to an agreement over frontier rectifications at a future date. Mr Marshall and Mr Bidault stated that in their opinion nothing in the Article would stand in the way of such an agreement. Mr Bevin said that if Article 5 was accepted in its present state it could go on record that this did not preclude any mutually and freely negotiated agreement for rectification of frontiers at a later date if Jugoslavia and Austria so desired. Mr Molotov said he considered these statements of great importance and asked for time to study the Article further.

We were not without some concern at the deeper meaning of this question, although the Western powers took it as proof that Russian agreement on the frontier issue could be secured. On the diplomatic stock exchange the shares of the Austrian state treaty suddenly jumped. Congratulations poured on us from all sides and journalists scenting a new story stormed us with questions. Late that afternoon General Clark invited me to tea. He also thought that one



of the main obstacles to the conclusion of the treaty was now on the way to solution. That evening glasses were raised high in the restaurant of the Hotel Moskva and the Russian orchestra played Johann Strauss' *Blue Danube Waltz* to the two thousand diners. The omens favoured Austria.

But the second secret session of Foreign Ministers brought with it a dramatic transformation. Molotov told his colleagues what they had to offer him as far as German assets in Austria were concerned. The Western reply was a repetition of their old formula. A fruitless debate followed on what had really been decided in Moscow in 1943. Here is the relevant passage from the protocol of the session:

Mr Bevin asked why the U.S.S.R. proposal included the term 'direct forcible action' instead of the commonly accepted term 'duress or duress'.

Mr Molotov maintained that the previously agreed formula would provide Austria with all sorts of pretexts to avoid the surrender of German assets; hence they were using the other formula. He claimed that it was always possible in Austria to find excuses that property had been taken under duress and that it would be impossible to unravel the various stories. Austria differed from the other countries with whom treaties had been made because in the latter cases there had been no Anschluss, nor had there been the economic confusion which followed. He claimed that the provision in the Soviet formula for the exclusion of property taken by way of Annexation was adequate and that the adoption of any other definition would reduce reparations to nought.

Mr Bevin said that he was quite prepared to withdraw the U.K. proposal for special arbitration and accept a formula allowing for bilateral settlement which would avoid Mr Molotov's fears that disputes would remain unsolved or continue indefinitely.

Mr Marshall emphasised that this was not a question of seeking to reduce German assets in Austria nor incidentally to increase them. What they were trying to get was a clear and just understanding regarding what these assets were. There were means

## **'BETWEEN' LIBERATION AND 'LIBERTY'**

of doing so e.g. by arbitration. He had little to add to what Mr Bevin had just said on the question of 'force or duress'. 'Duress' has a special significance in the English language. Direct forcible action would merely apply it, for example, a property owner had to be actually thrown out of his premises, not if he was threatened with a gun or threatened with imprisonment. The question under discussion was not the total value of German assets in Austria but what constituted German assets and he claimed that under the Potsdam Agreement German appropriations acquired by force or duress should not be taken as reparations.

The atmosphere became more and more icy and this second session broke up in the worst of moods. Its sole result was to determine the date for the final Foreign Ministers' session.

We were not satisfied with the tactical handling of the Austrian question. If the collapse of the conference was indeed inevitable and if Soviet agreement to the conclusion of the treaty was not obtainable, then we wanted the reason for the collapse to be a dispute over frontiers and not over a German asset. The principle of the inviolability of frontiers was self-evident to the Austrian population which was united in its opposition to any frontier revision. But the question of German assets was legally far too involved to make it fully comprehensible to our people. Large sections believed that the withdrawal of occupation forces—including those of the Russians, would be such an immeasurable economic and political boon that it more than counterbalanced the economic concessions demanded. Experienced in intercourse with dictators, the Austrians felt that the danger did not lie so much in Communist activity as in the presence of the Russian secret police. For them the decisive question was this: would the state regain the right to have on its territory only its own military forces and be in a position to exercise sole authority?

It was still night when we mobilised our friends and requested interviews with the Foreign Ministers. Bevin spoke with us at length on the Austrian problem. It was decided to move a resolution urging the immediate establishment in Vienna of a commission of

enquiry into German assets, in order not to break up the Austrian part of the conference. During the summer, Bevin added, the commission could clarify the problem from the legal angle, so that the next Foreign Ministers' conference would probably be able to conclude the state treaty. But I did not conceal my pessimism in view of the overall international situation.

The fruitless Moscow conference was already beginning to throw its shadow over the future relations of the great powers. There was already obviously a turn in General Marshall's mind: the great conception of the Marshall Plan and his perhaps that of the Atlantic Pact. He explained to us with the earnestness and dignity characteristic of his personality that he understood our fears but nevertheless could not tread the path of apocrysm. When Russia refused her inability to squeeze any unjustified advantages out of the Austrian treaty, she could be all the readier to give way at the next conference.

When I returned late at night from the British Embassy to our hotel, reflecting on our future tactics, I had before my mind a vision of the fate in store for our fellow citizens in the Eastern Zone. A few days earlier the Russian winter had broken for days on end the River Moskva carried ice floes. Overnight, without any transition, it had become hot and clear. But it was certainly not spring-like hopes that filled our minds. We thought rather of the nervous tension it would cost the citizens of the Eastern Zone to keep faith with their country under the bayonet of a foreign police force, and of those who would have to pay for their opposition with harsh punishment. How could it ever be possible after an occupation lasting years to keep alive the idea of Austria and freedom. With these thoughts filling my mind I stood before Marshall and told him gravely that I foresaw years of uncertainty, pressure and insecurity. The only thing on which we could base our hopes was our unconditional will to struggle and to resist so that Austria might remain free.

But for the coming hard winter we needed food and coal. General Marshall said little. He simply declared: "In that you will have my full personal support." He asked for an immediate summary of our requirements, which we handed to him in a memorandum.

## THE PROMISE OF LIBERATION AND DEFEAT

Looking back it may be said that this promise was amply fulfilled, giving us the economic strength to endure many hard years. I also asked the Foreign Ministers to take the initiative in the immediate release of the Austrian prisoners of war held in Russia.

The formal final session passed off in a frosty atmosphere, as might have been expected. The closing mood in 'Aviation House' was almost hostile. The Vienna commission was set up and the resolution recommending the release of prisoners of war was accepted. In the afternoon I visited Molotov in the Kremlin and handed him a memorandum on the matter to which he promised to give sympathetic attention.

The fate of our prisoners of war was always of cardinal concern to us. Our representatives abroad were instructed to work unceasingly for their release.

This was in fact the only sphere where we allowed the Communists to make political capital out of any success that we achieved. The fate of these people far outweighed any question of prestige or narrow political interests. This was the reason why we held aloof from all Western moves in the matter. When the United Nations later undertook to intervene in Moscow we refused to participate and preferred to take independent measures. Our aloofness allowed certain successes to mature although our patience was often severely tested. Releases were announced and then again and again postponed. We never knew whether it was the cold war or administrative difficulties in the vast expanse of Russia that caused the delay. I very possibly propagandized by dinner into the prisoners that the Austrian Government could not be bothered about them, had no interest in their return, did not want to increase the number of unemployed, and so on. We never made any reply to all this, for was not the main thing their unobstructed return?

On the eve of our departure, when I was just fishing my bags out from under the bed to pack and was wearing only my pinto, a journalist suddenly entered the room and asked me for my comments on the break up of the conference. I asked him firmly but very definitely to leave me in peace as I had nothing to say. Whereupon he reported to the whole world. Gruber was so

staggered that he could not even speak.' The impression created in Austria by this news can easily be imagined.

The very evening of our arrival back in Vienna, 29th April, I made a sharply-worded radio speech to the Austrian people. It was a flaming protest at the way Austrian problems had been neglected. I ended with the words: 'Austria will live and continue to live—not thanks to, but in spite of, Allied policy.'



## Post-war Politics: an Analysis

The whole of Allied propaganda before and during the Second World War was based almost exclusively on the experiences of the First. German historians and right-wing propagandists, with Ludendorff at their head, attributed the German defeat in 1918 to a 'stab in the back'. The Allies were anxious to prevent the emergence of a new legend—and in this spirit they evolved the formula of unconditional surrender.

There is no need to repeat how harmful this formula proved in relation to the war and the post-war period. It was based entirely on faulty conclusions, for the breeding ground of a radical right-wing dictatorship was not so much Ludendorff's propagandist fairy-tales but rather the incapacity of the German democrats to make full use of the power at their disposal. It was their lack of determination that made right-wing extremism possible.

Allied policy *vis-à-vis* Germany in 1945 was based on retaliation and never took into account that she might have to be won over in the foreseeable future. In the second phase of post-war policy this awareness imposed itself automatically, enforcing a headlong revision of the original policy. For a time overlapping tendencies led to a zig-zag attitude, which at one time encouraged right-wing extremists and at another confused the democratic parties. In both cases it offered easy openings to Bolshevik propaganda. Western policy hardly attempted at all to put into practice the sound moral principle of ensuring progress by uniting all freedom-loving and internationally-minded citizens irrespective of their national boundaries. (The conception of collective guilt cannot, of course, be reconciled with this view.) But this time, fortunately, the errors of the 'twenties were not repeated. The tragedy of Western policy in the inter-war period lay in the fact that it obstinately refused to grant Stresemann, the democrat, even a fragment of the concessions later made most willingly to the Nazi who demanded them

at the point of a gun. Even amongst many moderate people, this basic error helped more than much else to justify fascist methods in Germany and Italy.

The change in policy regarding Germany was enforced by the collapse of the policy of Eastern alliances and the new type of defence problem that then emerged. Russian political and strategic thought in the post-war period was overwhelmingly determined by the experience of the Second World War. Russia was forced to see an enemy driven upon her Western frontiers advance to a considerable depth into her territory in her most important industrial areas. Many military commentators attribute the successful defence of Moscow and Leningrad as much to Hitler's strategic mistakes as to the extraordinary achievements of the Soviet army. Fiddell Hart, General Fuller, and General Gullion, amongst others, have pointed out how severely the loss of these two centres could have handicapped the Russian conduct of the war. In his criticism of Hitler's interference in German strategy, *Hitler's Warlord*, General Halder points in particular to the way he prevented the German armies reaching these two centres by causing the best assault divisions to devote themselves to mopping-up operations in the cauldrons of Kiev and Brains. The conception of a *cordon sanitaire* along her western frontier may well have sprung from the Russian fear that in any future conflict their armies would not have sufficient time to deploy. Other observers however attribute this aim to the Communist urge to expand. The search for motives of an expansionist policy is of course futile for interference with the course of justice cannot be justified by any 'motives'. Should this principle ever be abandoned then international law, which is weak enough already, would be condemned to complete collapse. In any case experts say that from the military standpoint a *cordon sanitaire* is obsolete. Standards of security often derive from the past and not from any analysis of future possibilities.

Be that as it may, the organisation of a ring of states friendly disposed towards Russia was pursued energetically and successfully. It soon became clear that this formation was nothing but a cover for their future dependent status. The aim of the *cordon*

## ~~THE ABOLITION OF DEMOCRACY IN EASTERN EUROPE~~

*sanitaire* was to establish the security of the Soviet Union, although as a protective measure it was too primitive to do justice to the task allotted to it.

The abolition of democracy in Eastern Europe could be brought about without apparent disadvantage to the Soviets only because nobody called them to account. But the discredit suffered by Russian foreign policy must have endangered the security of the country more than the latter gained in defensive strength. This must be all the more the case as it can be assumed that the rapid development of military technique will overcome territorial boundaries more quickly than these can be built up by political and military infiltration.

Russian interests, which in this case can hardly be distinguished from those of the Bolshevik party, would have been far better served by an agreement that eliminated aggressive hostility in the neighbouring republics but did not bring the Soviet Union into open conflict with its allies. Such a settlement would certainly have been possible, given the readiness of Western politicians to go a long way in meeting Soviet demands and give Russian assurances against the revival of Central European militarism.

Another source of anxiety to the Soviets was the emergence of the *Blasov* Army. As so often during the war, the German administrators in Russia were ruled by ideas as immoral as they were absurd. They originated as usual in the arrogant contempt for facts. The early months of the easy German advance in 1941 seemed to justify the forecast that Soviet power was tottering and would collapse altogether at the powerful kick of a military boot. Such, in any case, was the prophecy of the battalion of blockheads sent to different parts of Russia to observe Soviet conditions. They spoke contemptuously of the Eastern sub-man who could never be considered a possible ally for the Germans. For years all political proposals that were not based on these absurd theories were rejected. The army's Russian experts, it was said in Berlin, are often supposed to have suggested throwing political dynamite into the Russian social structure by proposing a new division of the land. It was argued that the Bolshevik revolution itself had won over the country with a proclamation to this effect, thereby



destroying the morale of an army of which eighty per cent were peasants. (The illusion of a new order did not last long for the bitter experiences of the first economic period soon showed that the divided soil was unable to produce the necessary surplus of supplies to feed the towns, not to speak of export requirements. The consequence of this was the grouping together of peasant households into *kolkhozes* and later *sovkhozes* - i.e. the return to large-scale agriculture.)

Thus those advisers asked 'Would not the announcement of a new division of the soil - the creation of genuine ownership and of family holdings make the Russian countrymen ally of the German Army? No answer was ever given for the Nazi leaders rejected the plan. Precisely the opposite policy was put into practice and the existing Soviet administrators were replaced by former Baltic barons whose arrogant behaviour and violent methods unleashed the hatred of the inhabitants driving them into the woods as partisans. All this must be made clear in order to understand the astonishing phenomenon of the 'Vissov Armies'. In his book *Soviet Opposition to Stalin* General Fischer points out that the Nazi leaders had actually to be compelled to agree to the formation of Russian auxiliary troops. In spite of all that had happened, it was still possible for General Vissov in the last year of the war to organise an efficient army of almost a million men. This almost unbelievable success in recruiting Russian prisoners-of-war must have thoroughly alarmed the Soviet Army leaders. This may perhaps explain why Soviet counter-espionage tries to kidnap anyone born in Russia or of Russian parentage. Hundreds of people were carried off in secret to Russia after the war, no matter what nationality had been granted to them in the meantime. The trial of the Blum gang showed that even in the Western Zone of Austria regular bands of kidnapers were at work. It was hoped to prevent any future enemy having at his disposal military organisers or political propagandists of Russian origin.

<sup>1</sup> Harvard University Press, 1952.

<sup>2</sup> Benno Blum was tried before a United States military court in Salzburg in 1950 for kidnapping people from the Western to the Eastern Zone of Austria. (Translator's note.)

## ~~BETWEEN LIBERATION AND THE FUTURE~~

All this shows how deeply Russian post-war policy was dominated by the fear of a Third World War. The strategic principles of both camps influenced political decisions to an extent that must not be underestimated.

What were these principles? 'That war-making unit will win which strengthens during the war and the one that weakens will lose.' This short, pithy statement of Stalin is certainly correct if the course of the war is considered as a whole. An increase of strength is not so much measured by tactical successes in the field as by the building up of reserves of manpower and material. The decisive question will be therefore: where are those factors concentrated and what would their loss signify?

From the economic angle, the two centres of power, America and Russia, have the following characteristics. America is a vast workshop of almost unlimited productive capacity, but limited in her reserves of manpower. The fundamental outlook of the United States demands a sparing use of human life. Our boys are her greatest wealth and their employment is the supreme demand that can only be justified by special danger to the whole.

Russia, however, with her high birthrate and vast expanse, is a country of almost unlimited manpower reserves but her productive capacity is limited. The prevailing philosophy favours the use of masses in war.

When America is at war she will try to replace men by the machines which she possesses in abundance. It is indeed ironic that Russian policy succeeded in involving the United States in a war in Korea where reserves of manpower were more necessary than anything else. For the moment Russia can hardly hope to overtake the productive capacity of the United States or damage it to such an extent that her own industry becomes superior. Should war come, the primary aim of Russian strategy would have to be to conquer areas of high productive capacity and thereby create the possibility of overtaking the enemy. Such areas are the Ruhr and Southern Japan.

The United States could hardly attempt the conquest of Russia by means of vast armies. On the contrary, their strategy would be to weaken the East by using technico-military methods to such an

extent that the latter's manpower reserves lost their value through a shortage of arms and munitions. But judging by the experiences of the Second World War such a process can only be lengthy. Nobody can today estimate to what extent it might be shortened by the use of atomic energy.

Thus the main problem for American strategy would be: How could those important workshop—Europe and Japan—be defended successfully in order that the value of their productive capacity to an enemy be not outweighed by their possible loss. From this point of view the United States could only start conflict with any prospect at all of success, if it was not had been taken for the ground defence of the great industrial area.

Conversely, the successful defence of this area would deprive the Soviet armies of a direct strategic aim in case of war. In other words, it would no longer be possible for the Soviet Union to compensate for its potential losses by rapid military action. It is therefore easy to see why Germany and Japan are of such fundamental importance to the balance of power and mutual security. Only on the basis of these facts should all possible steps to avert the later course of events.

Several phases can be clearly distinguished in post-war politics. The first was characterised by universal faith in the continuance of the war-time alliance. This faith was first described as the phase of illusions. Statesmen and diplomats in general succumbed with astonishing confidence to the same illusion. It had been fostered by war-time propaganda which was also intended to gain the support of public opinion for an alliance with Russia that was not exactly popular. Countless speeches and articles preached the cause of the Soviet Union. The dark sides of the Communist way of life began to pale and its advantages to come to the fore. As so often happens, the tactical origin of this propaganda was soon forgotten and the uncritical tool of it its free value.

Not must it be overlooked that this was not the error of individuals but of a whole generation. The swing in American policy in favour of friendly relations with Russia broke with a tradition of many years that had morally condemned Soviet Communism and looked on it as a potential enemy of the United States. It was

necessary to combine the practical political alliance with human calculations, in order to awaken sympathy for what was at first a 'mysterious' ally. Can it be wondered that certain people, through their lack of political training, and others, through opportunist calculations looked on this tactical propaganda as a new political strategy? Such people later fell victim to their credulity. For in the more recent phases of post-war history the pendulum swung just as far the other way, with McCarthy the standard-bearer of the counter-attack. Even though many Americans looked on the anti-Communist movement as exaggerated and hysterical, there can be no doubt that the general sentiment of the country had set itself against real or alleged Communist influence in government offices. It was perhaps a false estimate of the American temperament that led high authorities to try to underestimate the strength of this sentiment.

The treaties with the satellites were concluded during the phase of illusions; and results showed how a faulty political philosophy can become the cause of innumerable errors and failures.

The period of illusions did not end until the cold-blooded machinations of the Communists had utterly eliminated Western influence in Eastern Europe, contrary to the war-time agreements. If only people had had a clearer idea of the different political philosophy of the two systems, then they would never have confused Communist phraseology with democratic reality. Paper is no protection against violence. If those who are enemies on principle of a democratic order promise democracy, then they obviously intend something that is quite different from the traditional meaning of the term. Through thoughtlessness, complacency and headlong haste one of the most magnificent military victories of the twentieth century was politically wasted.

Not until the Moscow conference of Foreign Ministers in March and April 1947 was the turning point reached that led to a new international phase. The conference's utter lack of results only reflected the refusal of Western negotiators to make further easy concessions to the Communists. In General Marshall a man had come to the fore who was free from all illusions regarding future Soviet aims. Nevertheless, it may seem surprising that we thought

the sudden change in Western diplomatic tactics over-hasty. Why had we to take this view?

It was difficult to believe that the Russians had not made clear to themselves the consequences of Communist expansion in Eastern Europe. It is therefore not impossible that they might have been prepared to make concessions elsewhere in order to keep their foreign policy on an even keel. Various factors indicate that until 1946 the Soviet delegation was instructed to advance the preparation of the Austrian treaty. The sudden change in Western policy in 1947 was tactically therefore a blunder, but may have been its ultimate strategic aim, a controversial step. Would it not have been wiser first to pocket the other sides' concessions before radically remodelling the propagandist and diplomatic front. In important areas, such as Czechoslovakia or China, tough negotiating tactics, unaccompanied by the production of any fundamental change in Western policy, might have arrested the Communist advance. I will not speak of the possibility that perhaps a general *modus vivendi* might have been found. Moreover, such a sharp change in Western policy conceals great risks.

From 1947 to 1950 anti-Russian propaganda was indeed brought into play but not much happened on the recruitment front. In the West there were enough people to whom the reverse process would have seemed wiser—a quiet strengthening of the armaments of the United States and the other Western countries, combined with a gradual stiffening in negotiating tactics but with no over-loud propagandist accompaniment. In fact, however, the path actually taken led to the Soviet Union being warned in time, and speeding up her policy of *fait accompli*. Russia now threw her whole weight behind recruitment.

Once the radical transformation in American policy had taken place, it was conditioned by the fear that Austria too might fall victim to Communist aggression. The fear originated both in the weak position of the Western Allies in Europe and also in the well-founded realisation that democracies always react far less quickly than hostile dictatorships, their counter measures prepared well in advance for all contingencies.

A member of the American Senate, noted for his insight into

European problems, once spoke in Vienna on the special position of Austria. Afterwards he listened carefully to the reasons for our greater optimism. But when he objected that the Cominform would always have shock troops ready to stoke up a Communist *putsch*, we could only reply that in case of danger we might well expect the West also to hold reserves ready to counter any possible attack after the evacuation of the country. You'd better wait until such a force is really created - was his significant reply.

Both fears important and justified in themselves, certainly dictated care. But is the West hardly had an accurate idea of the reason for the Communist seizure of power in Eastern Europe, its mistaken view led to wholly unreasonable exaggerations.

How would the security of Austria look after the conclusion of the treaty? We believed that this could only be weighed up against hypothetical factors.

The military and political superiority of the Eastern bloc might continue or even become stronger. Then we also had to reckon with further political or even military attempts at expansion. Nor was an attack on Austria entirely beyond the realm of possibility. The country therefore had to have at its disposal a powerful army so that in attack would be no harmless stroll. From our past experiences we had learned the bitter lesson that the pre-condition of outside help is always the capacity for self-defence, and this can only be possible where the population and armed forces are educated to look on frontier violations as a challenge to which the only answer is immediate armed resistance. Only then can one hope that other forces will bestir themselves.

Any attack on Austria should be looked on by the great powers as a *casus belli*. This does not inevitably demand that treaties be concluded. Paper alone can never give security. The conviction had to be deeply embedded in world public opinion that the loss of Austria would entail the loss of the whole of central Europe. Propaganda of course could only spread this conviction and not create it had it not been justified by the facts in themselves. Austria is the classic example of a political and strategic position which must in all circumstances remain independent. Nor can Austria ever become the base for any military action by the Western powers.

against the Eastern bloc. The mere defence of its independence would be achievement enough for the free world.

The second possibility might be to paralyse the Eastern bloc's superiority by a programme of recruitment and a redistribution of forces. In this case there could no longer be any talk of the East taking the military initiative. The balance of power would bar the way to any adventures. The security problem would solve itself.

The third possibility must necessarily appear to us the likely one: that the conclusion and putting into practice of the state treaty would fall at a time when the struggle for military, political and economic hegemony in Europe — going indecisively to and fro between the two power blocs — against this background in isolated military attack on Austria would be only slightly probable. On the other hand, there existed the danger of political and military penetration, when aid from the democratic powers is so easily refused because the seizure of power takes place only gradually, apparently without outside pressure and on a legal basis. We had therefore to pay especial attention to this possibility.

We had already explained that circumstances favoured us more than our Eastern neighbours. Here Communism had so easily come to power. Austria has no real peasant proletariat. Large landowners do not own more than five per cent of Austrian soil. Not only in the mountains but also in the foothills of the Alps, almost the whole land is in the hands of the lower middle class. The free, conservative peasant homestead secure in its possessions is one of the most important props of the social order. There is no possibility of overthrowing democracy from the countryside. The internal aggressive potentialities of a Communist revolution are mostly present where the proletariat of town and country are united against the democratic order. Lenin himself has analysed these conditions most carefully and for this very reason prophesied that Spain would be one of the European countries most exposed to revolution. Indeed, only the establishment there of a rigid military dictatorship in the thirties prevented the revolutionary movement from achieving its aim.

The percentage of Communist votes in Austria was very low and in three elections stuck at a steady five per cent. The task of

eliminating anti-democratic elements from the police force had made good progress. An official who puts his loyalty to his party above his loyalty to the state, when danger threatens, cannot reasonably be tolerated in such a position. The police, in combination with an effective even if small Austrian army, made it possible for us to confront with calm any Communist adventures.

Finally, we had to face up to the possibility of strong economic pressure. But to this our reply was that by comparison with pre-war years the proportion of our trade with Eastern Europe had declined from forty to about ten or twenty per cent. So long as the West with its financial and economic power was prepared to take up the challenge of a trade war, Austria could never be made ripe for assault by this means alone.

What was the military position of the Western powers in Europe? From early on the Americans had been thinking of employing German troops in defence of European security. This at once evoked criticism in Europe. Nobody could of course deny that a consolidated Germany would indeed constitute the strongest defensive power in Europe. But again it was the tactical execution of the idea that seemed to disquiet Western European critics. There were loud announcements of the number of divisions to be inaugurated against Russia.

But to the extremely suspicious Russians a policy of strength is never one whit less than a war of aggression against the East. These propagandist failures, therefore, even before a single German soldier had been enrolled were a warning to the East to intensify and strengthen its preparations with all possible speed. This significant and basic error was accompanied by a misunderstanding of what was politically possible inside the European conglomeration of peoples. America, thinking in simple categories, reduced in practice every political question to the primary problem of the East-West conflict. But in Europe there were other conflicts which hardly claimed less attention. Russia is far-off and Germany is near. That, for example, is one of the fundamental principles of French political thinking. Political necessities on both sides of the Rhine were anything but easy to reconcile. German rearmament, if it took place formally and solemnly, was a matter to which French



public opinion could agree neither easily nor rapidly. What other possibilities were there? Some Western politicians deduced them from German history.

After its defeats in the Napoleonic wars and the consequent limitations on the Prussian army, the Prussian Government followed the suggestion of Stein and Hardenberg in adopting the *Krumpet* system whereby the number of recruits was never larger than had been laid down in the treaties with Napoleon. But by an accelerated training tempo and a quick turnover the number of trained units far exceeded the totals allowed. After Napoleon's defeat in Russia fresh Prussian divisions suddenly emerged from nowhere, it seemed.

The decisions limiting the *Reichswehr* after the defeat of 1918 were also treated elastically. In numerous intermediate forms between civilians and soldiers secret reserve were created which later made it possible for Hitler to organise a large number of divisions with a relative speed. Reimbursement in defiance of treaties is a Prusso-German tradition. Could not a similar method of expanding German armed strength again be attempted with the approval of the West? Would it not have been possible in an emergency to organise units more quickly by this means than by a complicated treaty structure?

The French would have found it incomparably easier either to shut their eyes to the new facts in the process of creation or to agree to an increase by insignificant doses in the total of German effectives—even if these would have had to be swallowed in relatively quick succession. But the endless discussions and manoeuvres centring on the ratification of the Bonn Conventions would not have arisen at all nor the alarm signal been hoisted. Despite German military preparations the normal diplomatic machinery would have remained in being, and here and there perhaps, unfavourable trends in Soviet policy would have been prevented or at least delayed, perhaps even, corresponding Soviet concessions might have been won. The chances of a quick Austrian treaty would have been improved. Naturally the Soviet Union would not have remained long in doubt about the real trend of events in the Allied camp or in Germany, as the case might be. But

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It is a very different matter whether a definite legal fact becomes a turning-point that leads to a dramatic decision or whether a relatively slow process is completed without visible transition and without any accompanying publicity.

Russia would first have had to inaugurate a campaign of accusations before her counter-actions became in any way comprehensible. Even the strengthening of Russian armaments would not have proceeded so quickly and radically, it was argued by supporters of this policy, as did in fact happen. Where Germany was concerned, strong police forces would in practice perhaps have meant not less security, but at least security would have been ensured when it was required, as the course of events later demonstrated. Moreover, a solution along these lines would not have prevented the strategic integration of West Germany. This would then have been a proof of strength and not a paper *Anschluss* that lacked the necessary strength precisely at the most critical phase of post-war history.

All these more subtle proposals were rejected. In their stead there came the plan for a European Defence Community to include German military units. The whole matter for several years dropped from the hands of political and diplomatic leaders into those of lawyers and parliamentary tacticians.

How did the East react to this new phase of the cold war? The collapse of the Moscow Foreign Ministers' Conference was followed by the Cominform's attempt to counter the Western policy change by a programme of sabotage and terrorism. The Communist parties of Western Europe, based on their positions in the trade unions, were now to pass over to the 'internal' counter-attack. This programme was condemned to complete failure. The reason for its political miscalculation was simply the fact that the Communists had a mistaken conception of the Russian Revolution. Its success was not only attributable to the Communist party's militancy but equally to the war, which Russia had already lost in 1916, and to the complete incapacity of the machinery of state to suppress revolutionary attempts. History teaches that revolutionary minorities in the modern state have their best chance at a time of military collapse.

The collapse of the general strike in France and the complete lack of success of the anti-militarist demonstrations, which reached their climax in the sinking of a rocket launching ramp in the harbour of Toulon, caused Cominform headquarters to withdraw its programme of open rebellion and replace it by a general peace offensive. This was intended to bring the Communists no longer into direct conflict with the law but to counteract the new Western policy by organising a world wide propaganda movement. But the peace offensive, inaugurated with great *blare* and probably with important resources as well, enjoyed but a meagre success. Only a bare handful of intellectuals who were in still better travellers already, or who had made themselves notorious for their excessive pseudo political ambitions or complete lack of judgment were ready to join a peace movement side by side with its Communist initiators.

In any case the flood of resolutions left governments cold. The course of Western commitment was not affected by this move, all the more so as its emphasis lay in the Anglo-Saxon countries which were as good as inaccessible to this propaganda. The failure of these different Cominform policies finally forced the Soviet Union to take two fundamental decisions: to press its military preparations forward with all the energy at its command but simultaneously to seek a better understanding through a *modus vivendi*.

But before Moscow arrived at these far reaching conclusions we still had to pass through several phases of the cold war.

## Chapter Nine

★

### Failure of a *Putsch*

On 5th May 1947 the Communist Party organised 'hunger' demonstrations in the streets of Vienna. These generally began by the U.S.I.A. concerns deciding to down tools and march to the Ballhausplatz, where the Foreign Ministry and the Chancellery were situated. There was nothing specially new this time, so we paid no special attention to the strike. I was busy the whole morning at my desk and although I could hear the shouts of passing groups from time to time I did not let myself be distracted.

In the early afternoon the police suddenly began to clear the rooms overlooking the streets. I sought out the Chancellor at once and found the whole building in an uproar. A delegation of the demonstrators had been admitted and had demanded immediate negotiations with the Eastern bloc to ensure adequate food supplies by establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union. The Chancellor's answer had not satisfied the demonstrators.

Thereupon Communist orators climbed the surrounding railings, and harangued the crowds, which had by now increased considerably. We went to the front of the building to inspect the position but were received with shouts and isolated stone throwing. A photographer and a police official were almost killed by the crowd and were seriously wounded before they could be rescued. The demonstrators made as if to storm the building. About eighty had already forced their way in and we had difficulty in throwing them out.

On closer observation we saw that amongst the workers from the factories of the Vienna suburbs there were also several hundred international agitators and agents concentrated at certain points. The police later reported the presence in large numbers of Albanians, Bulgarians, Rumanians and Poles amongst the demonstrators. It was not impossible, therefore, that there was a plan to overthrow the Government by force. The police were inadequately

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**armed.** They were already scared and without the direct order to shoot from a higher official would probably not have been prepared even to use the arms they had. Would this order be given in time by the Ministry of the Interior?

There was direct telephonic communication between the Federal Chancellery and the Ministry of the Interior but the news that we received was anything but reassuring. The Ministry advised us to make our escape as best we could—the building could no longer be defended against attack.

At the behest of my colleagues I turned to American headquarters and asked them to intervene in view of the extreme emergency. General Hickey, Chief of Staff of the American troops in Austria, had already succeeded in calling a session of the Vienna Security Commandatura although it was the Soviets' turn to take the chair. General Hickey pointed to the urgency of the situation, the Federal Chancellery was exposed to immediate attack with which the Austrian police seemed unable to cope, he declared. The Russians rejected my intervention. While this was going on, we could see Soviet Russian officers all in uniform, with their links of the demonstrators, evidently maintaining contact with them. But when the atmosphere was at its storm in the Commandatura, the demonstrators dispersed as though by magic. Western intervention had had its effect. There existed no doubt at all that between the two command centres some sort of liaison apparatus existed. An immediate reform of the police machinery promised better security for Government buildings in the future.

Allied aid made available the first arms deliveries to the Viennese police, who now received some fairly modern equipment—carbines, machine-pistols, tear gas and baton—line equipment. An improved alarm system was set up to ensure timely protection of the inner city in case of need.

A period of relative calm followed. Could certain strange rumours be the reason? Some people maintained that negotiations were under way between Moscow and Vienna, others that secret talks with the Communists were in progress. The Communists were expected to enter the Government in strength, bringing Russian concessions as their dowry. Fischer, the Communist, would become

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Foreign Minister and government policy would be transformed. This news was not borne out by the facts. I thought it impossible that negotiations on foreign policy could be undertaken without my knowledge.

For lack of any other suitable forum a circle of active ministers was formed, which met regularly at the Ministry of Education. These meetings were born of a feeling of dissatisfaction with the conduct of affairs and served to co-ordinate our work in the Cabinet. From this circle at least, no one had been drawn into discussions of the kind I have mentioned. In the meantime I learned further details from one of my ministerial colleagues. He told me that at the house of a certain deputy two meetings between Communists and important personalities had taken place, aiming at a reshuffling of the Government, from which all pro-Western ministers would be removed. The next step would be direct negotiations with the Soviet Union to clear up all current problems, my colleague continued. The reward for this kind deed would be Russian concessions in the state treaty negotiations. Whatever happened, decisive Communist participation in the Government had to be reckoned with. If need be, the Socialists would be booted out of the Government and a list of ministers drawn up that would be fully acceptable to the Russians. Here Dolletberger, a well-known fellow traveller and Professor of Economics at Graz University, was appointed chief candidate for the office of Federal Chancellor, my colleague concluded.

He added that his conscience demanded that I be informed of these events. I replied: 'Such catastrophic and criminal nonsense must, of course, be prevented. These tactics would hand the country over to the Cominform. They would result not in agreement on the state treaty but in the break-up of Austria: there are other occupying powers besides the Soviets. If the party refuses to follow my advice then I shall lay down my office and in my personal capacity mobilise the entire population against this proposal. It is absolutely out of the question for me to participate in a government of People's Party plus Communists versus Socialists.'

My colleague knew enough. He promised to join me at once. 'What shall our tactics be?' he asked. There is only one—to sit

the thing out quietly until it becomes public knowledge and then to strike,' I replied.

Several uneventful days passed; then the time was ripe. The Chancellor, by the way, was as much in the dark as the rest of us about what was going on. He was invited to a discussion with Fischer, who spoke in grandiloquent terms, giving him to understand that he had Soviet concessions in his pocket, but in return the whole system of Government policy and propaganda must be changed. Most of all, Foreign Minister Gruber must disappear from the scene. Practically all my colleagues were also on the dismissal list. Herr Fischer was even impudent enough to call upon the Chancellor himself to resign. Dobretsberger was the man! The details of this remarkable conference were never quite cleared up.

The Chancellor listened calmly and without comment to Fischer's remarks. That was the only possible thing at the time. Even though there was not the slightest doubt about the patriotic conduct of his colleagues, it was not wise in the light of subsequent events to expose oneself to the ruthless brutality of a Communist. Looking back today, it must be recalled that in 1947 world opinion was very different from what it later became. Hungary, Czechoslovakia and even Poland still seemed to be free countries. Nowhere yet had there been a clear, unambiguous breach with Communism. Many things in this discussion may not have seemed so unusual.

The following evening we met in the house of General Chérrière, the Deputy French High Commissioner. After dinner the Chancellor came up to me and told me the whole story. In the meantime, he added, he had thought about what had happened, and was convinced that a Communist attempt on our independence had been planned. Our only reply could be the most vigorous resistance. I was naturally very satisfied at this, but for the rest remained unaware of the more detailed circumstances in which these conversations had taken place. I decided to act immediately, for I was assured that the Chancellor would stand by me unconditionally. Even though it was night I tried to contact some friendly journalists, but strangely enough not one could be found. Early the next morning I finally succeeded in reaching the Vienna correspondent of the Associated Press. I invited him to my office and gave him

a detailed account of Fischer's demands. Then I turned to my work as usual.

The news swept through the world, bursting like a political atom bomb. The Viennese midday papers reported the story in heavy type. Political life was reduced to a complete shambles. The morning papers the next day attacked me for spreading sensational news. Fischer was chief editor of one of the most important newspapers in Vienna, *Neues Österreich*, which was really intended to be the organ of the coalition government. There he opened the fight against the Foreign Ministry with a violent onslaught.

But then matters gradually began to get clearer. It was night when the governing body of the Austrian People's Party met. Sharp words were exchanged. The meeting reached its climax at midnight when, supported by my ministerial colleagues, I demanded that from now on guarantees must be given against such escapades; otherwise a federal party conference must be summoned. We were accused of wishing to overthrow the Federal Chancellor—which was nonsense, for only our loyalty could save him. Not until the following morning was the matter looked at in a more sober light. Although the whole affair might well have plunged the People's Party into a severe crisis, it did in fact become a salutary means to enable us to formulate our policy more fruitfully, for we decided that from now on all our ministers should be brought together every Monday to co-ordinate policy. A real organ of leadership was at last created.

In the meantime an avalanche of political confusion began to roll down on us. The Socialists naturally seized hold of the affair to make the most serious reproaches against the People's Party. In Parliament there were furious exchanges and Fischer delivered one of his great fiery speeches, heaping coals of wrath on my head in particular. He roared into the Chamber: 'Where is this political adventurer who gives information to the press and aims at breaking up party collaboration?' I tried indeed to attract his attention but with his anger in full spate he took no notice of me. In any case, everyone knew who the target was of these wild accusations. But then he unscrupulously went on to reveal certain points from the discussions which could not exactly be described as cheerful.



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A few days later the Communist paper *Wahrheit* of Graz made his views known in a report entitled 'Our Ministers for Home and Foreign Affairs'. Here his anger boiled over: '... Ernst Fischer also demanded that an investigation commission establish the identity of the man who recklessly and inaccurately informed an American news agency and the Americans of this discussion. Only after this man was identified—in any other country he would be thrown out of politics—did that political errand-boy of the Americans, the present Foreign Minister, Dr Gruber, make his confession.

'What are we to think of Dr Gruber? I would not like to repeat what his own party colleagues not only think but also say about him when they are amongst themselves or in small groups. I believe that in such situations Austria does not need a vain complacent man as Foreign Minister, who gives three interviews daily—which he afterwards has to deny. We do not need a Foreign Minister who returns to Austria with an American Honorary doctorate but without the South Tyrol or the state treaty. Dr Gruber is undoubtedly "gifted", but he could make far better use of his gifts as night-club reporter on an American paper.'

The report continued: 'I believe that the present Minister of the Interior is probably the most unsuitable man possible for this post. I would not like to say here in a public meeting what tens of thousands of Socialists think about the Socialist Minister of the Interior. I would only like to ask what kind of a Socialist minister can it be who speaks of a riot engineered by Albanians when the workers of Vienna demonstrate—and then the very next day has to apologise to the Albanians, who only number fourteen in the whole of Vienna? What sort of a Minister for the Interior can it be who speaks at such length of Austrian sovereignty and then, when the workers are on the streets, calls in foreign police against them? Let him return to his former profession. During the Hitler period he was director of a company for life insurance and political reinsurance. He had a great deal to do with insurance policies. I say to him: Leave the police and go back to your policies!'

The debate in Parliament increased rather than diminished the confusion. I felt myself obliged to give a definitive summing-up of

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the position in a broadcast to the nation. The speech was recorded, but the Soviets refused to broadcast it. I thereupon invited Kisselyev to visit me and told him: "Naturally the *complete* text of my speech will be given to the world press. I do not doubt that it will be broadcast by Western radio stations. The fact that Riva (the radio station in the Russian zone of Austria) has rejected it on Soviet orders will enormously increase interest in it. Then I pointed out to him that Fischer always referred to Soviet orders or suggestions, which could compromise most severely the authority of the Soviet Union in Austria. The Soviet Union and its organs in Austria are one thing and the Communist party is another. Kisselyev answered heatedly: "The two have nothing to do with each other. Herr Fischer alone is responsible for what he says. He has of course never received any instructions from the Soviet Union. Our rather lively discussion led to a certain clarification of the atmosphere, in so far as Kisselyev evidently felt for the first time that the Communists' clumsy tactics might involve the Soviet Union in grave international complications.

The immediate success, however, was the fact that Riva broadcast the speech in full. It may well be said that in this scarcely post-war years it was the first unambiguous statement by any Government of its attitude to the Communist party.

People in the West are alarmed at the violent expansion of political systems. Is it? They see in this a breach of the agreements of Yalta and Moscow. Will the West eventually make its peace with these newly created political facts? That is possible, but certainly only on condition that every attempt to establish further dictatorships is dropped. It is not a question of the methods of their realisation. The mere appearance of legality is not sufficient to prevent reactions in the public opinion of the West.

The populations of the West vigorously demand that stronger means be used to protect their threatened freedom. Any attempt to bring Austria under the control of a minority would cause the collapse of the entire system of international co-operation. In Vienna itself the door to understanding would be closed.

• To argue that we should be forced to show more consideration to the Communists because some of our export markets are in

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Eastern Europe hardly holds water. Cheap prices are more important in selling our products abroad than Austrian Communists, whom we can only export with difficulty. If we had sufficient cheap industrial products, we would be overwhelmed with buyers from the Danube Basin. . . . To say that the Eastern European states would start a sort of trade war against Austria if we do not accommodate ourselves to their type of régime is nonsense. These states are not rich enough and have too many other worries of their own to be able to afford such actions. Nothing forces us to make political concessions to any Austrian party in the interests of our economic welfare. . . .

What is the Communist Party? It would be ridiculous to put all the various Communist Parties in the same category. In many states they have emerged in reaction against an incapable feudal dictatorship. Their revolutionary *clan* has important achievements to its credit. But in Austria this party of fanatics does not confront a dictatorship, alien to the people, but a living democracy. It has set itself an aim and like all fanatics underestimates the importance of the means in relation to the end. The methods whereby an end is achieved are values in themselves, such as the attitude to one's fellow-men and political decency, values which no human society can renounce. Our Communist Party suffers from this intellectual weakness. It would be senseless to evaluate this morally. It fights for its ideals as we fight for ours. But the Communist Party has put itself on a different moral level, where any means are justified to attain the ends proclaimed: lying, slander, terror and violence.

The chief spokesman of the Communist Party is pleased to represent personal friendship with Americans as a sort of war crime. The country that for years gave the Soviet Union effective military aid in its defensive struggle, that contributed decisively to the annihilation of the Nazi war machine is now the target for the most violent attacks of the Communist press. They would be far more ready to tolerate co-operation with Hitler than friendship with any American.

And now for Herr Fischer's action: Imagine that in neighbouring Switzerland the spokesman of a four-man parliamentary group, comes to the head of the government to tell him that he

does not consider him suited for the further conduct of affairs, and that he has already sought out a few suitable successors. In the switch-over, to be carried out as quickly as possible, he himself would even be ready to enter the government and assume full responsibility.

The head of the government would probably signal to his door-man to call up the lunatic asylum and have the petitioner taken away quickly and quietly. Why are things different in Austria? Quite simply because the petitioner behaved like a Member of Parliament and, pointing to his scanty following, hints that invisible but far stronger forces are advancing with heavy artillery far to the rear. That is why Herr Fischer is taken seriously. And therein lies the real and principal importance of this move. The dispute over who said what is utterly trivial and insignificant. Which of us in the heat of discussion has not used an unfounded, hasty turn of phrase? It only shows that any word you exchange with the representative of the Communist Party can emerge any day to be used against you. What is decisive is that Herr Fischer brought these things up. Whether he did so by banging brutally on the table or whether he winked and gestured with his cigarette is quite unimportant. How this meeting came about is also a secondary matter. What is decisive is that the Federal Chancellor immediately and decisively rejected his suggestions.

Fischer complains that the affair was published. It would have been a crime against the state to withhold it from world opinion. Any attempt to put the Austrian government under political pressure must be nipped in the bud. . . . What conclusion must we draw from all this? The Austrian people can peacefully pursue their work. They are not alone in the world. It has been proved that the two great political parties are quite strong enough to keep the state on an even keel. . . . There was neither a state crisis nor a party crisis, but only a defeat for Communist tactics. . . .

The reaction in the population was as favourable as anyone could hope for. In a relatively short time calm again prevailed. The intermezzo led in the end to a considerable strengthening of the Government's policy, quite contrary to the intention of its initiators. It was no longer necessary, however, to wonder why

the whole wrath of the Communists was directed at the Foreign Office. When I was returning home on foot to settle my thoughts one evening, I found at my door two police sentries armed to the teeth and wearing steel helmets. To what did I owe this increased protection? Whenever my name was mentioned at any Communist public meeting, the audience roared: 'Hang him, hang him!'

In the meantime events in Hungary followed thick and fast. Premier Nagy had to flee the country, the illusions of the Small-holders Party were torn to shreds, and the Communists ruthlessly seized power. It gradually dawned on even the simplest that political agreements were impossible with a dictatorial party that strove for sole authority which it used merely as a tactical method to hoist itself into the saddle and then to destroy all opposition.

However critical these episodes were, they did at least have the merit of reducing to a few turbulent weeks the quarrels of neutralists and fellow-travellers with our anti-Communist foreign policy. From their violent disputes there gradually emerged the uncontested basis of Austrian policy: free from blocs—but also free from the Communists. Certainly, some of our friends had made mistakes. But it was worth while remembering the remark of the Frenchman who said that the stupid always make the same mistake, whereas the wise are always making fresh ones.

On 12th May 1947 the Vienna Commission of Inquiry met to discuss all the facts relating to German assets in the hope of finding a suitable basis for a future decision by the Foreign Ministers. At the same time, it was supposed to work out appropriate proposals for a solution. The Commission accordingly only dealt with Article 35 of the state treaty, which concerned German assets, omitting from its discussion all other questions. Contrary to the expectations of many Western diplomats the talks dragged on endlessly. About sixty sessions had been held by the end of October. Over the summer a huge mountain of documents piled up which eventually yielded at least enough usable material to enable us to proceed to a complete inventory of the oilfields, reserve areas, refineries and distribution equipment.

Thus the summer ended. In the end all the experts were convinced that these complexities could not be solved on a legal basis

## LIBERATION AND RECOVERY

at all, but that only a commercial solution offered the prospect of creating a new and fair *point de depart* for the settlement of the problem. This line of thought produced the so-called Cherrière Plan.<sup>1</sup>

With this we were in agreement, although we thought the lump sum of a hundred million dollars was too high a starting point. No oriental merchant ever assumes, as I have mentioned earlier, that any offer is actually his opponent's last word. In an offer of a hundred million he will see a readiness to pay two hundred. In their propagandist zeal to paint the Soviets black, the Americans had had their experts calculate that the value of the assets claimed was eight hundred million dollars, going by the Russian formula. That was certainly a success in the propaganda war but turned into a damp squib as soon as commercial agreements really came into the picture.

At the end of the Vienna conference this plan was laid before the conference on the state treaty by General Cherrière as a resolution of the French delegation. The Soviets replied ironically that they would study it. The general optimism ran very high. But it was not shared at the Bulthausplatz.

<sup>1</sup> This plan was named after General Cherrière, French representative at the Deputies' Conference at Vienna in 1947. Its provisions were: (1) transferring to the U.S.S.R. for a limited period certain German assets included by the U.S.S.R. as fifty per cent of the productive capacity of Zisterlitz, one-third of the test-burns in the Zisterlitz Burn, refineries capacity of 250,000-300,000 tons; (2) transferring permanently to the U.S.S.R. the property downstream of Austria of the Danube Steamship Company; (3) a lump sum in Austrian deliveries to the value of one hundred million dollars in settlement of all remaining Russian claims to German assets.

## Joining the Marshall Plan

On 27th June 1947 a conference of European states met in Paris at the invitation of the British Government to draw up their reply to the American proposals on the Marshall Plan. Molotov himself took part in the conference. The Czech Cabinet decided to accept any invitation that might be extended. But there hardly existed any doubt that the Marshall Plan was a plan of the West for the West. Could it be seriously supposed that the Soviet Union, now at the height of its power after a long string of political successes, would accept conditions enabling the United States Congress to extend its economic aid? There was later much speculation about the dire embarrassment into which Western diplomacy would have fallen had Molotov joined the Paris organisation and, formally at least, agreed to the American conditions. Not a few diplomats are today of the opinion that such a move on his part would have made it impossible to put the Marshall Plan into practice. Be that as it may, even Russian readiness to co-operate would not in actual fact have made much difference to post-war history. Without a basic change in their policy neither the Soviet Union nor its satellites would have received economic aid. The Soviet Union was not ready to go to a political Canossa.

We, however, had many ticklish questions to face. We still had, for example, a Communist in the Government. How would he react when we brought before the Cabinet our declaration of adhesion to the Organisation of European Economic Co-operation? Did not our legal customs require Cabinet decisions to be unanimous? And how would the Russians react?

Vienna was full of optimism during the four-power conference. We had to exploit this to create an atmosphere favourable to our joining the Plan. We laid before the Cabinet a far-reaching authorisation to enter into active negotiations with this aim in view. To our relief our Communist colleague swallowed the motion

## ~~BETWEEN LIBERATION AND LIBERTY~~

without further debate. Had he not read it thoroughly? That seemed hardly possible, for he used to keep a whole staff busy tearing to pieces every motion and every law that the Cabinet discussed before he tabled his amendments. Probably he did not realise the full bearing of his agreement, nor had he yet received any directives from higher up. On the basis of this authorisation no further discussion by ministers of Austrian adhesion to the Marshall Plan was constitutionally required. But a few weeks later the world faced an utterly new situation. Molotov returned home snorting with rage and the Czechs were forced to withdraw their decision to participate in the Paris organisation.

This time Prague only fell in with Soviet wishes after stormy internal debates. Weeks passed before that point was reached. But the decision in my case was a black day in the history of free Czechoslovakia. It was the last chance when resolute opposition to Soviet demands could have strengthened the popular will to resistance, kept open the path to the West and cut across the idea of an *Iron Curtain* with the Eastern bloc. Looking back, it may well be supposed that at that time the striking power of the Communist Party was not yet sufficiently developed for it to be able to seize governmental power in twenty-four hours, as was later the case.

The turn about in Prague was the signal for our own Communists to start a wild campaign against Austrian participation in the Marshall Plan. Our Communist minister now demanded that no Austrian representative be sent to Paris to the foundation conference of the OEEC. I thereupon took from my pocket the Cabinet's decision and pointed out that the matter had already been decided, and on 16th April 1948 the documents were finally signed in Paris.

On my return to Vienna the Soviets launched strong attacks on us in the Allied Council. We received the first Soviet note of protest shortly after we had laid before it the texts of our agreements, solemnly signed by Vice-Chancellor Schusni, Mr J. G. Thirrdt, American Minister to Vienna, and myself. The Soviet Union said the note could not take cognisance of the Austrian government's decision, which represented a sensational violation of the Control agreement. Anxious spirits could already hear the iron curtain



## JOINING THE MARSHALL PLAN

Walking down on the Enns Bridge, where the Soviet Zone demarcation line ran.

We could only meet these considerations with quiet optimism. On what was this based? We believed that if the Soviets were attacked with lead then they would reply with lead. But if our ammunition was only paper, then theirs would be also. Austria's adhesion to the Marshall Plan is perhaps a propagandist challenge to the Soviets, but it represented in no way a violation of their basic interests. In Austria everything remained as before, as far as they were concerned. Their position in the country was far too advantageous for them to be interested in jeopardising it by hazardous moves, which, by the way, also involved the danger of closing the door on an understanding with the West.

We got our legal experts together to present the Soviets with a cogent answer. It was the dignified reply of a small country under intolerable pressure, but conscious of its rights and authority, to a great power. The Russian answer is a fresh note of protest in which the Soviet commander informed us that here could be no talk of putting the Marshall Plan in competition with the Eastern Zone. At the same time the Soviet information service sent him word to censor passages from the broader context which I denied accusations that the Marshall Plan meant the formation of a political bloc, and refuted those who said we could not turn our backs to importing food surpluses from Eastern Europe.

In contrast to the view of many influential Americans abroad, despite the Soviet attitude, few difficulties could be foreseen on the American side. The United States is a free trading country. Once Congress has laid down its regulations it is almost impossible even for the President himself to find the necessary elasticity in their application. But in the nature of things Congress drafted its regulations on Marshall Aid for countries that were absolutely free in their decision. The regulations foresaw, for example, that American inspectors must enjoy the right of free access to the organisations distributing American aid. But in our case there was no possibility of American officials enjoying free access to the Russian Zone. The State Department showed a great deal of sympathy for our position and together we worked out

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A procedure enabling reliable Austrians to function as deputies for the Americans and provide the necessary control reports. The American representatives soon realised that with our system of a free democracy, free press and free public criticism, the employment of the resources provided under Marshall Aid was an open book to any observer, and special controls were superfluous. We, for our part, were naturally very conscious of the need to prevent the Soviets from diverting American aid to their own purposes. In a relatively short time these negotiations, combined with our resolute conduct, enabled us to re-establish calm and confidence.

## *Chapter Eleven*

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### A Russian Concession?

The Conference of Foreign Ministers met at the end of 1947 in the shadow of the French general strike. In the late autumn the Communists had been removed from the French Government and the general strike was to show that the country could not be governed without their participation. Rail services were largely brought to a standstill and grave acts of sabotage endangered the lives of travellers. Near Nancy, for example, a whole express train was derailed when saboteurs tore up the track. But a few weeks were enough for the French Government to bring the strike to an end and this was of great help in strengthening its authority.

Even so, the London Conference felt itself under political pressure for it was generally assumed that the strike was not so much the work of the French Communists but was due rather to Cominform initiative. The mood of the conference was in tune with this view. Suspicion was almost greater than at Moscow and there was only a slight willingness to make concessions. For almost two weeks fruitless debates on Germany dragged on without the Austrian treaty even being mentioned.

I paid my customary visit to the four Foreign Ministers in order to obtain their increased initiative in the Austrian question. My conversation with Bevin was important in so far as it made the first breach in the demand for compensation. The British delegation was instructed to drop its demands for compensation to the extent of two-thirds of the assets destroyed by war in Austria and to demand in their place a mutual agreement between Austria and the states affected. As usual, my conversation with Molotov was cordial but fruitless. We did think we might assume though, that the Soviet Union would in principle be ready to accept the Cherrière Plan.

At the Conference, Molotov did in fact announce his acceptance in principle of the plan but reserved the right to make counter-

suggestions regarding the individual totals. He promised that the Soviet delegates would do this at the Conference of Foreign Ministers' Deputies, arranged for the beginning of February. Thus if the Conference did not produce the treaty, the prospect did at least seem to emerge for the first time of being able to settle the problem of German assets on a commercial basis.

Soon after our return to Vienna the traditional Shrove tide carnival began, when politics are at a discount. Cabinet Ministers, the Mayor and senior officials are at least expected to be present at the opening ceremonies of the larger halls. Visiting these functions is often just as important as attendance at political meetings. The citizens, gay with dance and song, want to feel that during these festive weeks they are at one with their political leaders.

On 24th January, in the midst of this season of organised gaiety, burst the Russian reply to the Cherwell offer. The Russians expressed their readiness to accept in principle the proposals but demanded a ransom of 200 million dollars and the handing over of the following properties and rights: two thirds of the oil production, two thirds of the oil prospecting rights, oil refineries with a capacity of 450,000 tons of crude oil and 25 per cent of the assets in Austria of the Danube Steamship Company. They also demanded the handing over of those oil distributing organisations which were at that time under their control.

As their price for renouncing the remaining German assets the Soviet Union demanded payments to the total of 200 million dollars within two years.

Carnival time Vienna's reaction to this note was typical. It let loose a flood of supreme optimism, for no one thought it difficult to raise the necessary cash. Even if 200 million dollars was a very large sum, it was still very low for the Western powers in relation to the sums which the United States alone had distributed through their general aid programme. Under LARRA for example, 400 million dollars had been distributed in Czechoslovakia. On the other hand, very extensive properties were owned by Russia in the Soviet Zone.

However, for those who were familiar with the world situation as a whole, the Russian reply was by no means as rosy as it appeared.

## A RUSSIAN CONCESSION?

I have mentioned earlier the grave fears existing in the West that the conclusion of a state treaty might put Austria into a position similar to Czechoslovakia. This was the first thing we had to fight against. Furthermore, there was the reluctance of Congress to make payments which might in any way benefit the Russians. We foresaw that it would be anything but easy to receive American aid in the payments question. Nevertheless, we set to work without delay and established an office to examine the economic consequences of the state treaty more closely. In co-operation with the Vienna Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Finance we organised a detailed inventory of these concerns requisitioned by the Soviets which, under the Cherniavsky plan, would have to be returned to Austria.

If these enquiries were to justify any degree of confidence, they had to be most detailed and correspond at least to a rough balance-sheet of the concerns working. But surveys of this kind were easier to plan than to execute. The USSR used its Soviet authority to prevent any enquiries by our officials. We had to use devious methods to assemble the necessary statistics but despite everything we had a serviceable picture of the situation inside a few weeks.

The Russian reaction was not slow in coming. The Secretary-General of the Chamber of Commerce was called to appear at the Hotel Imperial where he was told that he was spying on the Red Army and must understand the consequence that this might entail. I felt myself obliged to summon the Soviet Consul at *Illymes* to ask him to explain this procedure. The Russian was somewhat embarrassed. Why do you want to ask the employees of the CIA for information, to which they are not entitled? When you yourselves can obtain the figures you need from the USSR administration itself, he asked. That is an excellent suggestion, I replied. 'You will understand that we are legitimately entitled to know the value of the factories which Austria is to buy back at high prices from the Soviet Union. I therefore decline your offer.' A few days later we sent the Russian authorities a questionnaire. The reader will already have guessed that we received as little of an answer to this as to so many other of our queries.

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## *Chapter Twelve*



### **‘No More Frontier Discussions!’**

The Conference of Foreign Ministers' Deputies lasted from 13th February to 31st March 1948. The British Deputy was the Austrian expert of the Foreign Office, James Marjoribanks, and the American Deputy was Sam Reber, a career diplomat. When I chanced to remark in the State Department that apparently diplomats had at last taken over, I was told: 'Our first Deputy was a general, then we had a banker. After that we looked for a bishop but as we couldn't find one, we had to fall back on a diplomat.' The Soviet Union was represented by its Commercial Counsellor, Nicolai Koktomov and France by General Chérière, as before. The appointment of a relatively low-ranking Russian diplomat suggested that the Russians were still not looking for final decisions.

Despite the optimism that prevailed in many circles, for the reasons I have described earlier, and which was shared to a large extent by the international press, we did not meet under a kindly star. At almost the same time the conference of the newly founded Brussels Union was meeting in London. (This Union, or five-power pact, is a military alliance between England, France and the Benelux states, that was to make the first and important agreements on the defence of Western Europe.) It was significant of the atmosphere in which we were forced to work that the British unceremoniously bundled us out of Lancaster House in order to make room for the defence conference. For a time the Austrian treaty wandered to the top floor of Australia House.

As usual our discussions dragged on interminably. We haggled for hours over every sentence and even every word, no one showed any special hurry and disputes were relegated entirely to the level of propagandist exchanges. The junior members of the conference killed time by drafting ironical protocols which reveal the mood in which we worked far better than do the official minutes.

**'Record of the 300th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers' Deputies for the Austrian Treaty, held at Lancaster House on 24th December**

*1. Discussion of Article Bis Bis*

The Chairman (Mr. Tournet) proposed that the meeting discuss Article Bis Bis regarding the pound of flesh which the Council of Foreign Ministers had agreed at their week-end Conference at Oklahoma should be transferred to the Soviet Union. There were at present differences between the Delegations over the initial wording of the Article and also over the phrase at the end. With regard to the former point, the French Delegation could accept any proposal that was agreeable to the other Delegations.

The U.S. Deputy (Mr. Agnew) said that in so far as anything had been clearly understood during the Oklahoma week-end, it had been the clear understanding of his Minister that the pound of flesh should be transferred to the Soviet Union without a drop of blood *ou sans aucune goutte de sang*.

The Soviet Deputy (Mr. Risputin) said the British attitude was intolerable and could not be accepted by the Soviet Delegation.

The U.K. Deputy (Mr. Hammer) enquired what his Soviet colleague was objecting to. So far he (Mr. Hammer) had not opened his mouth.

Mr. Risputin rejoined that this was precisely what was intolerable. The Red Army and the Soviet people had suffered untold hardships during the war against German Fascism and had shed many rivers of blood. Even so, the Soviet Government was not claiming a drop of blood from Austria. It did, however, insist that the pound of flesh should be transferred with all the other substances belonging to it (or, if the other Delegations preferred, forming part of it). The Foreign Minister had said nothing in the Oklahoma Minutes to suggest that anything be excluded from the transfer except blood. Yet the U.K. representative sat silent, instead of supporting the just demands of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union had borne the heat of the day in the war against Hitler, Gumbel, Goebbels and Gess, and it was not

~~Mr Hammer said he thought he could agree to Mr Agrippa's new wording, subject to possible redrafting, but he would like to reserve his position about the exclamation mark.~~  
prepared to be thwarted now by the formalistic approach of Mr Hammer.

(At this point, the noise of the band playing in the Mall became such that the Deputies were happily rendered inaudible.)

Resuming, Mr Agrippa said he had just thought of a formula which might make the Soviet proposal acceptable to his Delegation. He proposed substituting before the Soviet list, in place of 'together with' (sinews, etc.) the words 'The Soviet Union shall not receive'. With this change he could agree to keep the exclamation mark.

Mr Hammer said he thought he could agree to Mr Agrippa's new wording, subject to possible redrafting, but he would like to reserve his position about the exclamation mark.

Mr Rasputin said the British member's position was unendurable. For his part he could only accept Mr Agrippa's text provided the word 'not' were replaced by 'also'.

Mr Lounedos welcomed the statements of his colleagues which seemed to him to have brought the Deputies sensibly nearer to an accord. The difference was now between 'shall *also* receive' and 'shall *not* receive'. He would like to put forward a compromise proposal for another word to replace both 'also' and 'not'. He suggested tentatively 'The Soviet Union shall *perhaps* receive'.

Mr Rasputin said he adhered to his position and had nothing to add.

In this set-up there was nothing we could do except keep all delegations aware of the urgency of their work and try to keep the discussions alive by making the most suitable proposal. Gradually, indeed, the path to settling the problem of German property really began to become smoother. The Soviets made proposals which brought perceptibly nearer an agreement on German assets. They reduced their demands from 200 million dollars to 150 million and extended the time for payment from two to six years. The question of principle naturally remained open: were the Soviets ready to acknowledge that Austrian laws applied to those working assets 'which remained in their hands'?



An English diplomat told us that the talks had reached the stage when the economic section of the treaty was now almost ripe for conclusion. Since the Moscow Conference it had always been assumed that the Soviets would only agree to recognise our frontiers if they received corresponding concessions on the issue of German assets, and it was of course known that we were not prepared to yield an inch of our soil. Nevertheless Ales Behler was invited to London to put forward the Yugoslav claims. Not surprisingly, the most heated debates were very soon under way. The Yugoslavs left the conference in no doubt that there could be no concessions on their side, although in the last resort they might consider renouncing the new round Klagenfurt. Behler began his speech with a sharp attack on the Governor of Cambrin, Ferdinand Wedemig, who was present at the conference as a member of the Austrian delegation. Wedemig was a notorious collaborator, Behler lectured, and must be dismissed. Then he attacked the Austrian soldiers and with almost equal violence, the former allies. In conclusion he repeated Archibald Blair's claims to Cambrin. His remarks were so violent that a Russian diplomat openly stared at him and tipped his forehead. This tiny gesture made us feel for the first time that things were not going so smoothly between Russia and Yugoslavia as we had hitherto assumed.

Behler's speech, which had lasted more than an hour, demanded an immediate answer. Prepared declarations were not given, even much good and tough notes made at the conference table had to take the place of the usual preliminary work. But we had hard-hitting stuff with us and although the debate had already lasted seven hours we gave Behler good as well as for Austria. As for Wedemig, was concerned we had documents to prove that he had been imprisoned in Dachau concentration camp at the time when the government was formed. That worked. An inaccuracy that is immediately shown up shakes the whole structure of the argument. That evening friends and foes assured us that our arguments had been the more telling and the more exact. We enjoyed our success, for Behler was considered a first-class conference man.

In reply to his attack on Austrian troops, which had not in fact existed—there were only Austrians in the German Army—we pointed out firstly that the whole province of Croatia had allied itself with Hitler and, secondly, that strong elements of the Yugoslav army itself had taken part in the struggle against the partisans. To end with, I, as a former leader of the Tyrol resistance movement, claimed the name of a good democrat just as much as did the members of the Yugoslav delegation.

The behaviour of Koktomov was typically Russian. Russia supported the Yugoslav claim, he declared, but was ready to discuss any proposal submitted by the other side. The British began to press him for a definite answer. It was not difficult to see that British tactics were to break up the conference if the Soviets refused to give a satisfactory answer on the frontier question. During one of those critical days I sought out the Foreign Office to learn something more of British intentions. Marjoribanks, their delegate, frankly admitted that he now had instructions to demand from the Soviets a clear statement of their attitude to the frontier issue or to move the postponement of the conference.

This situation naturally put us in a terrible dilemma. If we agreed to this, then the conference would break up; if, on the other hand, we recommended the continuance of negotiations, then this might easily be interpreted to mean that our attitude on the frontier issue was only apparently unyielding and not so in actuality. Faced with these two possibilities—either to assume responsibility for the violation of our frontiers or to risk postponement of the conference—we could only decide in favour of the latter. No treaty was better than to jeopardise our complete sovereignty.

That evening I had dinner with Kisselyev in a restaurant in St James' Street. The French restaurants seemed to please the Russians better than the purely English ones. Our conversation, carefully feeling its way forward, began with mutual compliments. For the first time since we had met, Kisselyev told me: 'I must admit it hasn't taken you long to learn your trade. The Ballhausplatz is once again working very efficiently.' I could not leave unanswered of course such a pleasant compliment and acknowledged that at least he disguised his more or less thorny task in

polite formulæ, always seeking the path of reason when he put them into practice

Although Kisseliev probably felt as much as I did that the conference was nearing its end, he did not seem to be at all depressed. I naturally steered the conversation towards the problem of frontiers. I wanted to make it absolutely clear to him that there could be no question of a treaty if our frontiers were not fully recognised. If the Russian therefore had no clear answer to give, then it was they who would bear the responsibility for the break-up of negotiations. Kisseliev repeated the old formula: 'We are ready to discuss my proposal.' Even a proposal including frontier revision. I asked him: 'We support Jugoslavia, that means that a compromise in the frontier question must be found,' he answered. I then said, 'If that is your first refusal then it means there will be no treaty.' Kisseliev ended the discussion with these words: 'The choice is up to you.'

I was now anxious to have clear information on how the West anticipated future developments. On this naturally depended the sort of language which we in Austria could have to talk to rally the population for further trials of endurance.

The next day I spent in working out a survey of the political situation for the Federal Government. I described probable international developments: the conclusion of the Atlantic Pact, Western rearmament and the probable Russian reaction. The most important unknown factor was of course the tempo of Western rearmament. In spite of detailed discussion with the Western foreign offices we were groping in the dark where this was concerned. I was hoping that the reaction to our memorandum would give us more information. In our analysis I therefore wrote optimistically that it would be concluded in about a year and that then a more favourable situation would probably develop for the conclusion of the treaty. Henceforward we would be able to reckon on a more stable period, less subject to international ups and downs. I asked my personal friends amongst the diplomats for their opinion of our survey. From their long faces it was easy to see that they had been reckoning with quite a different and undoubtedly a much longer interval. One of them said: 'The report'

...a good one, but if you add a few years to your estimates then it might be even better.' This was enough for us.

For the first time in the history of the conferences on the state treaty the three Western delegates and ourselves met in the Foreign Office to discuss future tactics. We could do nothing but declare that we were naturally most interested in a continuance of the conference. But understandably enough the supreme principle we were defending was the inviolability of our frontiers and the sanctity of our sovereignty once the treaty had been concluded. Essentially we had no objection to Western policy, i.e. any eventual concessions over German assets must be accompanied by the unambiguous recognition of our frontiers. After these introductory remarks it was easy of course to see the imminent end of the conference.

The sudden news of the Communist *putsch* in Prague burst in the middle of the conference. We were not at all surprised. The positions held by the Communists in the police force and army led us to suspect that the Czech Government had long since lost its freedom of action. Surrounded by Russian forces, with the internal enemy strongly entrenched, the democratic camp confused by a mistaken foreign policy and weakened by an unrealistic home policy—all this made it easy to foresee how even a timid attempt to turn the clock back must end.

The analysis of the last free elections in Czechoslovakia suggested in any case that the Communists were so strongly represented in the administration that it was hardly possible any longer to talk of free elections. Otherwise the high total of Communist votes in the countryside was barely comprehensible.

The effect on the Western Allies was a profound shock. Many Western observers, deceived by Masaryk's sympathetic personality, misunderstood the political possibilities of the Czechoslovak Government. The mechanics of political upheaval were only very vaguely known. It was not surprising that the Communists' sudden seizure of power burnt through the veil of illusions which official Czechoslovak foreign policy had thrown over the country.

Jan Masaryk was known and loved by everyone in Washington and London. His mysterious death contributed not a little to the

trama of the *coup d'état* and ardently aroused a sleeping Western world. Through his death Masaryk achieved what had always been his hope in life—he made a contribution to the ideals of freedom and humanity. A deep tragedy encompassed this life. Son of an outstanding father, he grew up in the Austrian tradition of tolerance and *joie de vivre*. It was enormously difficult for him to make his influence felt while he was being drawn more and more into the meshes of a dictatorial game. He was a sincere fighter against Nazism and even in the smoking ruins of Berlin he saw—as did so many other Slav politicians—the spectre of a new German imperialism take shape which concealed far too long the other threatening shadow which portended that heralded the disappearance of Czech freedom.

Masaryk had a small flat in Victoria Street in London, furnished with all the taste of a cultured man of the world. It was significant that in spite of his high office in Prague he never gave up the flat and kept up his lease and the rent. It was only a few months before his death that I met there to reunite our discussions on our common political interests. I was already convinced from his remarks, too openly and not only here but there, that the first was the downfall of the world of 1914 Austria, which for all its manifold problems had given to the Danube Basin stability and security. The second was his profound fear that Czech loyalty again threatened to fall victim to an imposed German philosophy. He was disillusioned with the Russian and directed also with Western policy which he said made it difficult for him to defend Czechoslovakia's democratic position. All this he expressed in his powerful and colourful vocabulary. There was no doubt that he was trying, with an approach to Austria, to correct some of those errors which, at least in our opinion, had led Czechoslovak policy astray. Despite all our scepticism regarding Czech freedom of action, we had at least hopes of collaborating with a state of such importance to us and were therefore deeply affected at its downfall and at the death of a politician of such friendly intention towards Austria. *Pušeň* in Prague resounded like a trumpet blast in an insecure and hesitant world. Now the generals were called for in earnest. Post-war illusions died a sudden death. And so did pseudo-

**neutralism in Austria . . .** This time no one questioned my comment on the situation. 'Developments in Czechoslovakia must denote to any sober observer the collapse of a political idea, namely, that an alliance with the Soviet Union will hold in check that impulse to absolute hegemony rooted in Communism and that in spite of this a free, democratic system, as it is elsewhere understood, can be maintained. The lesson that we must learn is simple and one which we have in any case learnt long ago—that the Communists must be kept out of power if we are to avoid a Communist dictatorship. Declarations mean nothing to a great power, however clear they may be. In foreign policy there have certainly been no more loyal followers of the Soviet Union than those politicians whom it has now crushed.'

Events in Czechoslovakia have had unexpectedly strong repercussions. Future history will probably show that there was no stronger spur to the unity of the West than the unleashing of this crisis early in 1948. For the first time since the collapse of Nazi Germany the danger signal was hoisted. Nor will public opinion permit it to be lowered until that strength is assembled which makes it inadvisable to set in motion similar developments elsewhere. Benjamin Franklin once remarked: 'We must, indeed, hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately.'

This was the position when the final session of the Deputies' conference met. Majoribanks asked Korkotov whether he was ready to recognise the inviolability of the Austrian frontiers. Here is an extract from the note made by a member of the conference:

London 5th May 1948

MR KORKOTOV	The position of the Soviet Delegation is quite clear in that it supports the Yugoslav claims.
MR MAJORIBANKS	Do the compromise proposals envisaged by the Soviet Delegation still involve the cession of Austrian territory to Yugoslavia?
MR KORKOTOV	Yes.

MR REBER:

Now further discussion seems to be futile. I will not bargain over Austria's frontiers.

Mr Berthelot agrees with Mr Reber.

The deputies adjourned *in fin*.

It seems, however, that Koltomarov never did not quite correspond to his instructions, or that it was indirectly translated. In any case, the Russian Minister in Vienna Koptelov categorically denied it. He told me: "The Soviet Union has never made a *conditio sine qua non* of the frontier question. We are ready to discuss any proposals made by the other side. In Parliament the Communist group exploited the break-up of the London Conference to make violent attacks on our policy. We did not simply sit back and wait for whatever the four powers eventually decide. We must approach the Russians with our own proposals!" shouted one excited critic of Austria's foreign policy.

"What would you offer the Russians if you were in my position?" I asked him. The Communist began to tut-tut. He had to think it over carefully, he said. He could not answer on the spur of the moment, and so on. But in ten days I shall have some suggestions for you, he added.

The Communists were really embarrassed. The Soviets had not the slightest intention of bringing forward concrete suggestions. That was the very thing they wanted to avoid. Mindful of the oriental trading maxim: "Never make a definite offer if you can avoid it," they preferred to sit back rather than insist and wait for the other man's offers. These they could always reject as inadequate until their opponent had reached the limits of his capacity. Unfortunately, the world never learnt what the suggestions of the Communist Party, i.e. the Comintern would have looked like. The Communists were abruptly forbidden any further part in the debate.

In the meantime we were invited to the Danube Conference at Belgrade. We were not enthusiastic at this. Even today we are unable to understand why the Western foreign offices made such

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a conference possible, for it could only have the effect of creating a sort of legal basis for the domination of the Eastern Danube. The Soviets would always coolly push aside any reservations made by the West. At the end of June we assembled a negotiating commission which we instructed only to join in a treaty which ensured complete freedom of shipping on the internationalised Danube. But the conference ended inconclusively.

The Russians and their satellites accepted a Danube statute hatched in advance; the Western countries duly protested, and our delegation duly returned home. On the way back from Belgrade one of our officials chanced to ask a high member of the Yugoslav Foreign Office what he thought of the result of the conference. 'Oh, the result is fine,' he said. 'It has given us a clear solution of the problem of traffic on the Danube. Russia can now sail along the Danube and we can now sail across the Danube.'

Our delegation reported rumours of tension between Yugoslavia and Russia and we accordingly instructed our political representative in Belgrade to be on the look-out. Even so, we were surprised at the depth of the gulf between Moscow and Belgrade when the crisis broke in the middle of 1948 with the Cominform's declaration outlawing the Yugoslav Communist Party.

The defection of Yugoslavia from the Eastern bloc changed the international situation to such an extent that it seemed worth while to get the talks on an Austrian state treaty once more under way. The United Nations Conference in Paris in the late autumn enabled me to make contact with the statesmen of the four powers to find out the lie of the land, so early in October I went to Paris. My first visit was to General Marshall to inform myself of his views and to learn how far the American Government would be willing to undertake a fresh and serious attempt to conclude the Austrian treaty. The Secretary of State was now familiar with all the complexities of our problem and was convinced that our policies did not in any way originate in a defeatist outlook. Even in the United States people began to see the Austrian situation in a different light. The imminent end of the civil war in Greece and the defection of Yugoslavia diminished to all appearances the Russian threat. The Marshall Plan was in full swing and Atlantic Union at a highly



promising stage of development. We could now be certain that the United States would not only give its formal agreement to renewed negotiations but would also undertake significant diplomatic steps to help conclude the treaty. The Foreign Ministers of Britain and France, Bevin and Schumann, also favoured the renewal of negotiations.

Vyshinsky, the Soviet Foreign Minister, took an identical view. In conversation with him I tried to take the frontier question a stage further. Vyshinsky's answer was never precise. The attitude of the Soviet Union in this question was well known and it has not changed, he said. But he added significantly, the main interest of the Soviet Union is a settlement of the question of German assets. In the cautious language of Russian diplomacy, that could mean that a solution of the frontier dispute would not come up against a Soviet veto providing that it is not possible to reach a satisfactory solution of the problem of German assets.

Bick in Vienna presented identical proposals to the four powers on 6th December 1948, proposing the resumption of negotiations. Their replies were affirmative and at the beginning of February 1949 the first session of the Deputies of the four nations.

We were not inactive in other fields. The Italian peace treaty had been ratified by now but we needed to establish relations with the Italian Government in the hope of obtaining the provisions relating to the South Tyrol. The talks began in Rome at the beginning of November and together with Professor de Gasperi and his Foreign Minister Count Starace, we agreed a method for the execution of important provisions of the South Tyrol agreement. Friendly speeches accompanied the signature in the Villa Mappamondo in the Palatino Chapel of the two agreements relating to Tyrolean communications. This friendly atmosphere helped greatly to improve the climate of negotiations.

A press conference in the Austrian capital brought together several dozen journalists who were not to be prevented from putting some extremely delicate questions. A reporter of the *Giornale d'Italia* for example, asked whether Austria was prepared to recognise the Brenner frontier. Neither from the Italian nor from our own point of view was this a useful question, but not to answer.

would have been almost more serious. 'The question should not be addressed to us but to the South Tyroleans,' I answered, 'for their satisfaction is what determines our decisions.' Apart from such meetings the first private audience after the war of an Austrian Minister with the Pope was a high spot of the days we spent in Rome. Our admiration was aroused by the Pope's deep knowledge of all matters relating to Central Europe and the Danube basin.

On 13th November we were back again in Vienna. The issues at stake between East and West Austria began to make themselves felt. The Austrians in the West were inclined to over-estimate the potentialities of our position in the same way as the Austrians of the Russian Zone were exposed to the danger of political pessimism. At the party conference in Krems of the Lower Austrian branch of the People's Party I laid down certain principles that I hoped would reconcile these two outlooks and also serve as a guide for our overall policy:

1. Austria must always be treated as an undivided whole. The language we talk must always be identical. We must not appear provocative in West Austria and weak in East Austria. Our language must everywhere be imbued with the same strength.

2. The Federal Government will always energetically resist illegal influences. The Communist Party, like any other, must respect the laws of the State. Its influence in public bodies must correspond exactly to its electoral strength.

3. We must demand that the democratic basis of our administration be acknowledged together with the democratic heritage that had been for many decades the essence of our way of life.

4. We must never, in spite of being in principle free to choose our alliances, permit ourselves to become isolated from our democratic friends in the West; otherwise we would inevitably fall a victim to the People's democracies.

5. The maintenance of a strong centre party of conservative and liberal democrats – a People's Party – was essential. Only such a bloc could give stability and continuity and defend Austria against Communist intrigues.

These warnings to the Austrian press were a national necessity.

But their effect did not last long nor did it go particularly deep. All they did was to stimulate the more intelligent journalists to give more thought to the position of their country. Their military and political articles in Innsbruck and Salzburg were just as dangerous as the political pessimism which was often predominant in the Eastern Zone. These very phenomena showed once more that a constructive state treaty policy is the precondition for the cohesion of Austria and the basis for a true revival. Even if our interminable conferences on the treaty were unfruitful at home and abroad they were at least a constant means of keeping alive the hope of the population, of critical times and of averting the danger that they might fall into a mass of despair and pessimism. Even though the real Austrian freedom was only fought over the conference table, it inspired the population, called forth their patriotic fervor and became an element of national unity.

The Conference of Deputies early in 1947 opened under different auspices than had previous treaty conferences. It had had made a change of front and not merely of location. It had to count on Soviet support for her claims. On the other hand even though the rock-like firmness of the Western powers remained unshaken it did at least begin to waver. When the Russians had tried in vain to achieve over several years their aim of the conference table with the Ju-slavs it had become one of the aims of Western diplomacy. This meant that even though the actual conference yielded in importance to shifts and shagging behind the scenes.

We were in an unenviable situation. On the one hand we had not the remotest intention of abandoning our demand for the inviolability of our frontiers on the other we were in a tacit agreement with the Western powers that it was futile to prepare the ground for later political cooperation with Ju-slavs. I had grasped, of course, what was under way and I knew accurately what was to be got under way. It was clear that Zhdanov the Soviet Ambassador in London and chief Soviet delegate had let out what was going on. All he had to do was to propose it every available opportunity, a session between us and the English was a move that

was quite at variance with the whole history of the Deputies' conferences. Zarubin was naturally assuming, and quite rightly so, that any public discussion of the frontier question would be extremely delicate either for us or for the Yugoslavs but generally for both of us. A cat-and-mouse game resulted, with the Western powers doing all they could to bring us together with the Yugoslavs behind the scenes. Their tactics were to avoid public hearings. Zarubin on the other hand always proposed that the interested parties be invited, 'without whom such an important question cannot be decided,' he said.

Another factor seemed to play its part in Soviet tactics. Basically the Soviets were of course prepared to make concessions on the frontier issue provided they received satisfaction over German assets. But they wanted as far as possible to burden Yugoslavia with the formal withdrawal of her frontier claims. These tactics became obvious when a violent press war between Moscow and Belgrade broke out over who was guilty of allowing the frontier question to be formally solved in Paris in Austria's favour. This 'war' brought to light some highly interesting matters. Soviet propaganda maintained that in Moscow the Yugoslavs had supported the partition of Austria, with East Austria to be integrated into a Slav bloc. They also maintained that the Western powers had tried to manoeuvre Austria into becoming a Catholic Alpine state. Belgrade's counter-accusations were not slow in coming.

It was difficult for the Western powers to reject Zarubin's motion and thus we had the first Austro-Yugoslav hearing. The opening Yugoslav statements were not so different in essence from their earlier ones but in tone they were more conciliatory and were no longer crammed full of accusations against us. They seemed to be dictated by the desire to create a basis for better relations. But they did not tone down their demands. In the course of later discussions an alleged Yugoslav offer to the Quai d'Orsay played a certain part, whereby Yugoslavia would have contented herself with those communities which had showed a Slovene majority at the last plebiscite.

Our reply was attuned to the overall situation: we gave no ground where the inviolability of our frontiers was concerned, but

we were conciliatory in tone. We went, in fact, one stage further and indicated that if the Yugoslavs withdrew their demands entirely, then we would be prepared to discuss certain commercial concessions. We were encouraged to make these concessions because, semi-officially at least, the United States had promised to compensate Austria for any commercial accommodation we made *vis-à-vis* Yugoslavia. I flew to Paris to learn more of the American offer from Averell Harriman, special European representative of the Economic Co-operation Administration.

One of the unofficial meetings arranged by the Foreign Office between the Yugoslavs and ourselves took place at a cocktail party at the house of one of the British delegates to the conference. Soon an animated discussion was in progress. Bebler said to me: 'We can't go home without frontier concessions. To phrase it, Yugoslavia needs economic aid more urgently than political pseudo-successes. Let us conclude a generous commercial agreement which will be of the greatest value to both parties.' Then I added: 'In present circumstances it must be in Yugoslav interest to conclude the Austrian treaty quickly. Liquidating these frontier difficulties is of vital importance to you.'

Bebler did not deny this. But, he continued, in your discussions with Italy you concluded the South Tyrols state but guarantees minority rights and delimits ethnically the South Tyrol by international treaty. Accordingly, the minimum Yugoslav aim was territorial autonomy in Carinthia. Bebler insisted that on principle certain communities (he had in mind Tyrol and Slovenes) must be ceded to Yugoslavia. Economic concessions seemed to him a sort of self-evident make-over.

But conditions in Carinthia and the South Tyrol were in two respects utterly different. South Tyrol forms a separate area of settlement with a German speaking population whereas certain areas of Carinthia are inhabited by mixed language groups. Secondly, South Tyrol hardly represented any danger to Italy. But the situation was quite different for Austria. We who were completely disarmed and politically weakened confronted in Yugoslavia a medium sized state armed to the teeth. Territorial autonomy was not objectively justified, it could also easily have

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developed into a grave danger to the whole state and become the source of disputes between Austria and Yugoslavia. In the meantime we pointed out in Washington and Paris that the Western powers would have hardly hesitated to give up their strict attitude over frontiers, had we shown the slightest weakness in defending our position.

Drew Pearson wrote in his column, 'The Washington Merry-go-round' in the *Washington Post* of 27th March 1949:

Backstage Diplomacy - Austria has protested to the United States against the American policy of getting chummy with Yugoslavia in order to secure an Austrian peace treaty. Foreign Minister Karl Gruber has emphatically rejected a so-called compromise which would have set up an autonomous Republic in the Austrian Province of Carinthia. This scheme was hatched at the London Conference. In turning down the plan, Austria reminded the United States that it pledged itself to guarantee Austria's present frontiers.

The questions put by the Western delegates gradually began to change. One of them asked me, for example, whether there was 'really' no doubt of our unwillingness to make frontier concessions. We decided we would have to send a confidential note to the three Western powers.

The note, dated 10th February 1949, read as follows:

According to information I have received the Council of Deputies has recently been occupied with Article 5 of the state treaty. This gives me occasion, in the name of the Austrian Federal Government, to declare that we unequivocally uphold the standpoint already announced—that any alteration, however slight, of the Austrian frontiers of 1st January 1938, is unacceptable.

For this reason the integrity of the Austrian frontiers can never become for the Austrian Government the object of negotiations with the Yugoslav Government. The recognition of the principles of the integrity of the pre-*Anschluss* Austrian frontiers cannot be challenged. The Austrian Government also affirms that reparations obligations are unacceptable. In the name of that

Federal Government I therefore request you not to co-operate in any arrangements which would be calculated in any way to question this standpoint, based as it is on the solemn decisions of the Austrian Parliament.

Thank goodness we received clear answers to this almost crushing note. In a few days the tables were turned. It was made clear to Bebler that Austrian frontier concessions could no longer be counted on. Relations between the Jugoslavs and ourselves began at once to harden again. The crude Russian who, ever violently in the know, insisted on a new hearing. Bebler's returned harsh again. However, he attacked us less than he did the great powers, accusing them of breaking their word and betraying Jugoslavia.

Our answer was due the following day. I now thought it timely to put an end once and for all to my false assumption about our frontiers. We reject any further frontier discussion. I declared that was the end of the Deputies' conference.

Here is a verbatim report of my declaration according to the protocol of 10th March 1949.

The Austrian Federal Government has no intention of taking part in a settlement which would put Austria in the position of a defeated people, reduced to an inferior status or in a settlement which would mutilate her natural frontiers and impose an unjust and unbearable burden on her people.

Today I have to request peace for Austria. Peace which ends the long lasting occupation. If, therefore, the intervention of a Jugoslav delegation at this table does not contribute any further to this aim, I have to request in the name of the Federal Government the recognition of the Austrian frontiers without further delay. The establishment of peace is considered throughout the world the prime duty of the two great powers. To withhold peace from Austria is an injustice. There is no justification whatsoever for further holding up this conference through Jugoslav objections. Austria is prepared to make a reasonable contribution to better understanding with her neighbour. Austria is *not* prepared to *buy* Austria's natural right to a peaceful life within her frontiers by further concessions.

## Chapter Thirteen

### *Détente in Paris?*

At Lake Success, in the meanwhile, the United States and Russian delegates to the United Nations, Dr Philip Jessup and Mr Jacob Malik, succeeded in finding enough common ground to justify calling a four-power conference to put an end to the crisis over Berlin. The auspices for a *modus vivendi* were not unfavourable, for the Russians must have realised that the normal functioning of the air-lift which supplied West-Berlin with all its vital necessities from 26th June 1948 to 1st August 1949 ended any possibility of using economic pressure to overwhelm the city. The summoning of a Foreign Ministers' Conference rendered meaningless further negotiations in London. The Deputies brought their work to an end.

The London Conference had at least taught us one thing: there must be a frontier settlement, if we were not to be involved in constant friction with the Western powers. As a result of her strategic position, sooner or later Yugoslavia was bound to rank as an important link in the chain of Western defence. Attempts by the West to put pressure on Yugoslavia to abandon her claims did not look a promising method. What we had to work for was a four-power declaration giving the frontier due legal protection and thus enabling us to enter the next phase of negotiations more favourably placed. But a favourable frontier declaration by the four powers could only be secured by making economic concessions to the Soviet Union; and these were impossible without the concurrence of the United States, whose support when the treaty came to be put into execution would, of course, be indispensable.

We set all our diplomatic machinery in motion in an intensified assault on these targets. It really seemed to us time to make it clear to the Allies that more attention must be paid to Austrian interests. This was the background to the outspoken speech that I made on 20th May to the federal conference of the People's Party, amidst



The jubilation of the whole hall. I threatened an international scandal, an open rebellion against the four occupying powers, a cessation of occupation payments, the establishment of an Austrian army. There were even worse things for a pessimist to read between the lines.

My party friends duly asked, 'When does the war begin?' But the effect of my protest can easily be imagined. The Socialist press, to be sure, was unfortunately unsympathetic and their military expert even declared the existence of an Austrian army, side by side with the Allied occupation forces, to be impossible, although in Hungary, Rumania and elsewhere national armies existed alongside occupation forces. The Soviets, at least, had no such scruples. In my own party also I had not a few opponents.

The international effect of the protest was far-reaching. On the very next morning the Soviet Minister called on me. 'What does this new path mean?' 'We must warn you against any reckless steps.' 'The Soviet Union will not tolerate...' and so forth. His nervousness was not artificial. But I had no reason to reassure him. Externally the speech soon produced his desired effect. Our friends in the foreign offices of the world were at first alienated and then shocked. But then they put their heads together and asked what could in fact be done for Austria.

What was the political background to our future policy? We thought that agreements with the Russians were possible. Even without an immediate execution, there would have been great significance in a legal agreement on the contents of the treaty. It offered a basis for the continuation of four power policy in Vienna. The settlement of the frontier problem was an important factor in relaxing the tension in the South, in itself the pre-condition to developing friendly relations with Yugoslavia.

After many hard words had been exchanged I eventually succeeded in winning over public opinion to support my policy, and could travel reassured to Paris. In all urgency I put our position before Dr Jessup. With his outstanding knowledge of international politics and law, he immediately understood our problems and the delicacy of our situation in the shadow of Soviet power. 115-117 Germany and Jugoslavia

That evening the American delegate, Sam Reber, told me over dinner in a Paris restaurant that he had had a long talk with Jessup. They had both concluded that the best thing would be for him, Reber, to return to Washington to prepare an offer to the Soviets.

On 11th June the Foreign Ministers' Conference met in Paris. On the very next day I had my first interview with Dean Acheson, the American Secretary of State. He listened to my remarks quietly and sympathetically. Then he said, 'We will make a determined effort this time to get you a treaty.' With this in mind I then visited Vyshinsky, the Russian Foreign Minister, in the Rue de Grenelle. It was to be a long conversation this time, lasting till late at night.

I left Vyshinsky in no doubt of our view that a decision could no longer be delayed: either the conference on the treaty would collapse entirely, or it would remain as the instrument of a peaceful settlement. I told him: 'If Russia is not ready tomorrow to negotiate openly, then the Paris Conference will mark the end of that post-war period when there were *four* powers called upon to settle the problems of the world.' Vyshinsky's reaction was violent. 'So far all the concessions have been made by the Soviets and none by the West. When have these powers ever sacrificed any of their own interests? . . . The Soviet Union,' he continued, 'is ready to make concessions but the other side must also make an effort.' 'But the frontier question,' I replied, 'is the pre-condition of the state treaty. I would prefer the conference to fail rather than that we should have to tolerate any insecurity along our frontiers. What are the Soviet Union's views on the Southern frontier?'

This question, Vyshinsky said, could only be answered at the conference table when the attitude of his fellow-negotiators was clarified. For the Soviet Union the question of German assets had priority; other matters were secondary.

The discussion then spread to more general topics. I was not afraid to point out that a great power that wishes to play its part in determining world affairs must also be prepared to make sacrifices in order to ensure a tolerable situation for other states. Vyshinsky agreed with me and said the Soviet Union fully realised that a great power must often neglect its own interests in order to guarantee international security. But an aggressive American

any obstructed any peaceful settlement, he continued, the Soviet Union could not permit international agreements to be dictated by a single power. It was like at night when I left the Russian Embassy. This time, I assumed, the Soviet Union was really ready to negotiate.

We now tensely awaited the discussion between the Foreign Ministers. Their first meeting began as usual with a preliminary skirmish over procedure. But it was now clear that any future plans to settle the German problem were condemned to failure. The Western powers limited themselves to negotiations on the possibility of discontinuing the airlift which, although it had certainly been very effective, had also been very costly. These German talks were of the greatest importance to Austria. We succumbed as little as anyone else to the illusion that they would lead to a solution of the German problem or even work out the basis for some future solution. But we had again and again noticed that the shadow of the German question always obscured the Austrian problem. We hoped now that a list of *faits accomplis* would be found. We welcomed with great interest in the favourable news about Berlin.

In the late evening of the second day of the conference we were informed of the Soviet Union's readiness to accept, subject to certain changes, the American offer and to recognise Austrian frontiers. The American offer in question provided for a division of oil production in the proportion of 6:4 in favour of the Soviets, the handing over of certain assets of the Danube Steamship Company and 150 million dollars payable in six yearly instalments.

This was the signal for a feverish outburst of activity by all delegations, at last the question had passed from the stage of fruitless debate to that of constructive businesslike discussion. What were, in fact, the Russian terms. In the first place their demands applied to the whole property of the Steamship Company in the Eastern Zone of Austria. This gave the Allies their biggest headache for they feared that the Russian might use the Company's landing-stages to smuggle both arms and men to and fro across the Danube. We had detailed discussions with the Americans and

**also made thorough enquiries into the kind of assets involved. Financially speaking, it was not too costly to build new landing stages**

The decisive question for us was whether the Russians would sign a treaty granting us the right to apply Austrian laws, that is, granting the River Police rights of inspection. It could, of course, be objected that in the case of a Soviet refusal Austria was too weak to make her laws prevail.

We thought the Anglo-Saxon conception of the treaty too formalistic. They looked at it primarily from the standpoint of the legal security of the country. We, however, looked on it primarily as an agreement to free Austria from an unwanted occupation. We had never believed that paper alone could ensure our security. We thought in terms of political categories. The question was this: what would the world look like on the day the treaty came into effect?

We were pessimistic regarding the date when the treaty would genuinely come into force. The Western powers thought the conclusion of an Austrian state treaty was a shrewd Russian move to manoeuvre the Anglo-Saxon troops out of Austria which would then fall in easy victim to the Russians. We, on the other hand, were convinced that the Russian evacuation of Austria implicitly acknowledged that any future expansionist aims could not be realised without the immediate threat of war.

Looking back, we would be justified in saying that later historical developments have justified our opinion rather than that of the West's military advisers. Even so, Western views gradually came to agree with ours. Leading American diplomats thought the evacuation of Austria a calculated risk that could and must be taken in the interests of Europe.

The American team – Jessup, Sumner, Charles Yost, Legation Counsellor, and John Foster Dulles, Republican adviser – was ready to recommend the Secretary of State to base his future action on our view of the situation. We now urgently needed Vienna's approval. We had already sent a discreet telegram indicating possible progress. Agency reports, on the other hand, were still groping in the dark, not knowing whether to be optimistic or

**Pessimistic.** Of course we avoided making public announcements as much as possible

We now asked Vienna in a long cipher telegram whether they would be prepared, on the above conditions, to concur in the solution of the problem of German assets. The answer was 'yes', as we had expected. Vienna only voiced the hope that we would be able to count on Western aid in carrying out the financial clauses of the treaty. Obviously on this point neither the Secretary of State nor his colleagues could make any binding promises, but there was no doubt that in view of their global interests, the United States would not leave Austria in the lurch.

The Paris discussions not only touched on all the political aspects of the Austrian question but also on innumerable matters of detail. We were kept at it day and night. On conscientious American and British colleagues were constantly asking us for definite answers to every possible question. We could not always supply them immediately, but finally we had reached a point when a common framework emerged with all its numerous economic and political consequences.

There still remained one obstacle. Despite the clarity and unambiguity of Article 5 which simply stated: 'The frontiers of Austria are those which existed on 1st January 1955', there was still no talk of the final security of our southern frontier. We could not admit that the internal structure of the mixed linguistic area be so loosened by a system of territorial autonomy as to make it impossible for us to hold and defend the area. We therefore had to give particular attention to the stipulations of Article 5b, which defined the rights of the minority. We were ready to recognise their linguistic and cultural rights. But we had nevertheless to be on the alert lest *in bono et in malo* the article be rendered invalid.

Here, too, we finally reached a satisfactory conclusion. Now the decisive session took place, when for the first time the final shape of a possible understanding became perceptible. Formally speaking, it was cast in the form of instructions given to the Foreign Ministers' Deputies, which obliged them to complete the draft of the state treaty by 1st September 1949. At half past nine in the evening we

received from our French friends in the Palais de Marbre Rose the final text of these instructions.

It was almost midnight before we had gone through all the documents and instructions in order to despatch a final report to Vienna. We roused all our people from their beds to get them to code the thousand-word despatch. We were all feverishly busy and it was almost three in the morning before we sent off the wire. By midday we had our answer. The news had understandably provoked immense excitement. The hopes of the people in the Eastern Zone had reached their peak, for at last they were to regain their freedom.

The Foreign Ministers were still holding informal sessions to determine future steps, while the press was being summoned to the Quai d'Orsay for information on the result of the conference. We were celebrating in a small restaurant in Saint Cloud and had just reached the hors d'œuvre when an extremely significant episode took place. In the midst of the press conference at the Quai d'Orsay Vyshinsky suddenly demanded the resumption of the Foreign Ministers' Conference, for he had received new instructions from Moscow and his right to sign was called into question. When this became known, even our hardest-boiled diplomats thought there was a mistake. The restaurant's only telephone was requisitioned at once. Vienna was also soon on the line, for the news had reached there by radio. There was such utter confusion and stupefaction that it was almost comic.

I myself took the news with relative calm. Even whilst reading through the text I had noticed a passage which Vyshinsky could only have appreciated with difficulty in its present form. The Foreign Ministers' session that was summoned at once was highly dramatic. After half an hour Bevin declared that he had no more time and must catch the boat-train to London. Thereupon he left the meeting. But Acheson and Schuman were able to reach an understanding with Vyshinsky that the Deputies be instructed to clarify the differences of opinion, and Vyshinsky let his signature stand. The relief was universal but the episode was not a favourable omen for later talks. The journalistic assault could now no longer be checked. Should we appear optimistic? Obviously, Austrian foreign

policy never achieved anything by being pessimistic. We wanted our optimism to be the impulse which would gain the support of public opinion. If even Austrian diplomats were pessimistic, then Allied diplomats would imply go on strike.

At last we were ready to fly home. But our electoral strategists demanded that we return by rail. The whole thing must make 'a good splash'. Elections were on the threshold. In Vienna a crowd of several thousand was waiting, at the station microphones were pushed in front of us, cameras flashed and speeches were exchanged. Publicity was the order of the day.

## Renewed International Tension

Before the Deputies' Conference began in London in July I decided to have a short holiday in the South of France. From there I could telephone London daily without being censored. But that was the reason why it was hardly a holiday at all: night after night I was dragged from my bed. Although we stayed mostly in small provincial towns, again and again our legation secretaries succeeded in reaching us on the telephone; and our delegation in London asked me daily whether they should agree to this or that text. Often very complicated matters were at stake, such as the protection of minorities in Carinthia or important decisions regarding the application of Austrian laws to Soviet property in Austria, and so on. To answer most of these questions with a good conscience needed repeated study of the documents as well as reference back to Vienna. After eight days I had to cut short my 'holiday' and fly back home.

In the meantime, the first indications began to appear that matters in London were not going as smoothly as was to be expected after the Paris protocol. We had, of course, never counted on a final text being reached in London, for the Soviets wanted to hold something in reserve for a meeting of Foreign Ministers in New York. But what we did want was to have the treaty in a form which would make unnecessary a further Deputies' Conference. I decided to fly to London myself.

Were the Soviets still willing to sign a treaty? That was the question. My first visit was to Zarubin, the Soviet Ambassador in London. His answer was unusually precise. 'If the question of German assets is solved,' he told me, 'then the settlement of the other unsolved questions will not present any difficulties.'

A year later in Vienna I had a talk with a young member of the Russian Legation. It was late and we were heatedly debating who was responsible for the failure of the state treaty. The young



Russian implored me to believe that he himself had seen the instructions to complete the state treaty, providing that the Russian demands over the German assets issue were satisfied. Only the complete change in the situation caused by Western rearmament had finally led to the issue of new instructions, he said.

The American delegate in London said that final concessions could only be made in Washington at a meeting of Foreign Ministers, for the National Security Council must first be given the opportunity of resuming its discussion of the Austrian problem. The Senate would also have to be convinced, but every possibility of securing a more favourable treaty had really been exhausted.

In view of this, there was nothing left but to break off the Deputies' discussions and resume them in Washington concurrently with the General Assembly of the United Nations.

In due course we sent our delegate into New York, but I decided to stay at home. We at the British Legation had utterly realised that any hope of a quick conclusion of the state treaty no longer existed. The wave of international tension which followed our Paris success had abated by now. To be sure our views coincided with those of most diplomats, and even Herbert D.emberger received the following telegram from our delegation in New York:

New York, 11 November 1949

To your cipher telegram No.

I today Bischoff and I had the opportunity for a long conversation with Zarubin in the course of which you state our views known in accordance with the above mentioned telegram. Zarubin emphasised that he had no delaying intentions and declared himself ready to send a telegram to Vienna urging accelerated negotiations on Article 48 although he knew nothing of its merits. The French representative admirably summed up the general mood of the delegates and their collaborators. He said it would really be the end of all diplomacy in the present situation we did not soon reach a conclusion.

Zarubin told me he was reckoning on negotiations lasting another ten days.

Austrian Delegation.

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The ten days brought neither the treaty nor the end of all diplomacy. The entry of Yugoslavia into the Security Council, to the accompaniment of violent Soviet speeches, was the external symptom of the end of that strange interregnum which had dominated 1949. The hour frost of the cold war again began to retard the growth of the tree of peace.

The Western powers repeatedly proposed that a drafting committee be established to give final shape to those articles already agreed on. Zorubín firmly rejected this request, although it must have been self-evident to anyone who was really concerned about the quick conclusion of the state treaty. It was obvious that his task was to delay and not to complete.

At first the negotiations did make some progress when the Americans—too late, of course in our opinion—offered economic concessions. But when the Soviets realised that the Western powers were now prepared to give way point by point and that they would eventually find themselves obliged to sign the treaty, they tried out new delaying tactics.

One day the Soviet Minister appeared at the Billhausplatz to inform us that his Government was now ready to negotiate on the so-called dried pea debts. These dried peas which the Soviets had originally seized as the spoils of war were later presented to us in 1945. Now the Soviets demanded payment for this and their numerous other donations. Whereas they had hitherto always refused to discuss the matter at all, they were now all eagerness to receive our counter-proposals. These we sent them by letter. But a few days were enough to show that the whole business was only intended to play cat and mouse with the Deputies. London had to refer to Vienna and Vienna to London. These delaying manoeuvres made it immaterial whether negotiations were suspended in either capital.

Vyshinsky, strongly pressed by his colleagues, showed little interest in the treaty which he tried to represent as untimely and unimportant. That, at least, is what we were informed by conference circles. Soon the Deputies' discussions on Austria were broken off without result, although a date for their resumption, in London was still fixed. Before the end of the United Nations

session the Foreign Ministers also met to discuss the Austrian treaty

In Vienna, in the meantime, we kept on bombarding the Russians with requests for an answer to our proposals about the famous dried peas. Half a dozen notes were unreturned. The inevitable comment of General Sheltoy, the Deputy Russian High Commissioner in Vienna was, "We are studying them now." We were never too tired to send Moscow further reminders: it is always useful to show up the ill will of a contracting power for what it really is.

## Chapter Fifteen



### A Second *Putsch* Fails . . .

In the meantime tension was rapidly growing inside Austria. We were evidently on the eve of new Russian attempts to put pressure on us. Their encroachments on the administration continually increased and they even demanded the withdrawal of 'hostile' police officials. Then, at the end of the year a Soviet soldier lost his life by drowning after trying to molest women at a dance. It is not known whether someone pushed him in a nearby river in self-defence or whether he fell in while drunk. In any case the Russians accused an Austrian policeman of murder. But the latter had made a timely escape and was now in custody in the American Zone. Thereupon the Soviets demanded the immediate arrest and handing over of the Security Director of Lower Austria, although he had nothing at all to do with the case. This unheard-of demand was roundly rejected by the Austrian Government, but this official still had to make his way by devious routes to the Western Zones.

The Communist Party, emboldened by these events, assumed an extremely provocative attitude. During the budget debate, Fischer, the foreign affairs spokesman of the Communists, spoke less in order to attack the Federal Government than to threaten the Western powers with 'unpleasant surprises'. I did not for one moment doubt that he had received some sort of a hint from Cominform headquarters that they were planning a new campaign of expansion—perhaps the Korean War was intended to be the first of these unpleasant surprises—and that Fischer had garrulously announced something that was probably supposed to be kept secret. I announced my intention to reply, in order to clinch matters at once.

'You say that we are to expect unpleasant surprises if other powers do not soon decide to drop certain actions against the Soviet Union. (Fischer: 'Down with the cold war!') We have had enough unpleasant surprises. Now we want some pleasant ones.'

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I can only hope that you have not spoken out of turn, for otherwise the international situation would inevitably cause us the greatest concern. Do you think we can stand many more unpleasant surprises without the peace of the world being shattered? If you think that, then you have utterly misunderstood the international situation (Communist Deputy: Down with the cold war!) Sir, what you say shows me how the view of the Communists have become bloated with power. That is perhaps why certain principles are no longer being solved as easily as before. Interruptions: Fischer has accused the Austrian Government of having put in the Cold War. I reject these accusations in a firm but not simply defending her interests. But I do have the impression that the Communist party is conducting a hot war in Austria internally.

Events soon showed that the statement of the Communists were not empty talk. The Korean War was the first of their surprises and others were to follow. But the Eastern Bloc also had some unpleasant surprises to put up with.

As far as we were concerned, the first four months sessions on the state treaty showed that we could not expect any progress for some time. We discussed with the West a paper in which it was not time for them to take in their hands and to be led on their occupation of Austria as protection against unilateral Russian occupation and were ready at any time to deal simultaneously with the Russians. Significant limitations of the occupying regime were to back up this declaration.

But as far as occupation is concerned, the certainty is as I had always feared. The British and French had initially refused to renounce their shuttling which had only led to justification for their claims. De Gaulle had been tactically but finally to make them change their mind and to make the only really possible policy.

Nevertheless the change from military to civilian High Commissioners brought us a number of important advantages. This change, so at least, I was later to tell the High Allied officer, also had beneficial effects on the military situation of the Western powers. The High Commissioner had thus been involved in the morass of internal Austrian politics which had put them constantly

at odds with Allied diplomats, but now a rational division of labour came into existence. This enabled the army commanders to devote themselves exclusively to military matters. In so far as political differences arose, these were now settled by the civilian High Commissioners. For the first time there was complete co-ordination between all the occupation authorities. Simultaneously we were enabled to dismantle a number of semi-political army offices,<sup>1</sup> thereby economising in accommodation and occupation costs.

But in spite of these favourable effects, the result of the much-publicised Western initiative was disappointing on the whole. We did not give up our attempt to persuade the British and French to renounce their share of occupation costs. In this struggle, the Treasury was as impregnable a fortress as the Banque de France. There was no sadder sight than to see the American representative on the Allied Council defending Austrian interests, when occupation costs were being fixed, against a coalition of Russians, British and French.<sup>1</sup>

On grounds of principle alone we were active in summoning formal sessions in London of the diplomats dealing with the state treaty. These sessions were short, as a rule, and never led to any practical results. (Nor could the Russians be at all bothered to open talks on the 'dried pea debts'.) At this stage we were more anxious to gain time and bolster up the morale of the population by keeping the machinery of diplomacy in good order. The attitude of the Russians and their satellites presaged nothing advantageous. We could only hope that we would somehow struggle through to the end of this critical year.

At the beginning of 1950 our current discussions with the Soviets and our observation of their policy led us to conclude that we were on the eve of major Russian action, possibly of a military kind. In special instructions to our colleagues we drew their attention to the increased danger of international complications. Then, one Monday morning in June, the Korean War amply justified all our forebodings.

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written all the powers concerned have renounced any claim to occupation costs.

**W**ere similar moves being planned in Europe? We were reassured in this respect when it was clear that the United States had decided to offer armed resistance. Even so, the situation remained as critical as ever for the imminence in one form or another of a new Communist assault was obvious enough. The summer and early autumn of 1950 dragged on in constant tension.

Our difficult situation made our journey to Washington imperative, for it was essential to deal with American public familiar with our struggle and achievement. As usual, they were by international tension. We also had to deal with economic difficulties. The serious shortage of foreign currency was a consequence of the rise in the price of raw materials and a jump in the balance of our economy even though we had in recent years succeeded in improving our balance of payment quite considerably. We were now dependent again on our raw materials in order to purvey increased economic pressure at the very moment when Communist political pressure was at its peak. Both the danger and increasing Soviet intervention threatened to frighten the population. Furthermore, in the summer we had to deal with the serious mistake of leaving no objection on the part of our own workers to the wages question unfinished. It was particularly in late autumn, the most unfavourable time politically, that we were faced with this task.

Late in September the situation reached a critical point when the Communists organised a demonstration which almost broke through a well-protected and heavily guarded door of the Federal Chancellors office. The next day the Communist summoned shop stewards to their offices and put the Government an ultimatum. If the new wage and price agreement is not re-examined by the weekend then we call a general strike. The situation was made even more critical by the fact that some huge factories in Gritz and Linz were placed on strike and in Linz at least a dangerous situation had developed between police and strikers. Only very vigorous moves by the Government could master the general insult. All the signs showed that this time they sensed their great opportunity.

Hardly could I hobble round, my foot was in plaster as the

result of a road accident – when I was at the Ballhausplatz to discuss our next moves. The Chancellor asked me to draft an appeal to the population. We spent the whole of Sunday at it, carefully weighing every word, and in the afternoon a 'small ministerial committee' met to decide on the final wording.

The proclamation finally issued on 4th October urged the population to see the strike for what it was – a political attempt to rob Austria of her freedom and jeopardise all the economic progress we had made since the hard years of 1945, 1946 and 1947. We denounced the Communists' subversive attempts at overthrowing Austrian democracy and called on the whole population to hold aloof from demonstrations; above all, to refuse to support the strike in any way at all. We did not fail to remind them that the Austrian Federation of Trade Unions had also firmly rejected strike action.

On the following Tuesday the conference of Communist shop stewards met and decided to call a general strike. But this time the preparations of the Government in the Western Zones were so thorough that only a few factories were affected. This was important for it did at least diminish the Soviets' interest in a continuation of the strike. They had not the slightest intention of allowing work to continue unaffected in Western Austria while extensive strikes almost paralysed the economy in their own Zone. But even in the Eastern Zone the strike was not too widespread. It was only in the neighbourhood of Vienna that the situation became threatening, as well as in the Sudbahn round Wiener Neustadt and near St Pölten. There the U S I A simply barricaded certain factories, loaded the workers on to lorries and used them as shock troops to terrorise non-U S I A establishments particularly into downing tools. At times Vienna looked like a beleaguered city. As always, report after report came in, exaggerating the actual events or painting them blacker than they were. One Danube bridge reported the advance of Russian tanks, another the approach of low-flying Russian aircraft. There was much more to the same effect. Such intervention would have been absurd, for it bore no relation to the actual political state of affairs, but it still made quite a few people nervous.

On Wednesday at nine o'clock the Cabinet met to hear the latest



report on the situation. Communist outrages in Lower Austria were on such a scale as to reveal the intention of using terror to juggle the reins of Government into Communist hands. The attitude of the Russian commanders was particularly delicate and disturbing. Almost everywhere in Lower Austria they were preventing the Austrian police from intervening against demonstrators.

We had already called on the population to take any necessary steps for self-defence and in a whole series of places, but especially in Vienna itself, the Communists were held in check and partially put to flight. The attitude of the trade unions was beyond all praise. In the late afternoon of Wednesday the Communists began to tear up tram-lines in different parts of the town to blockade streets and road intersections by piling up vehicles and erecting huge road blocks. Here also local Communist leaders prevented intervention by the Austrian police. The next town, Wiener Neustadt was alarming. Several thousand Communists from the neighbouring *Levi* factories had seized the post office and the municipal buildings. They had disarmed the security forces who were much too weak to intervene. The population was completely cowed. Many thought our cause already lost.

That afternoon we met in the Ministry of the Interior to discuss the situation. When I was asked my opinion I repeated what I had already said in the Cabinet—I could not believe that the Russians were prepared for direct violent intervention. The committee asked me to discuss with the three Western Commanding powers whether it would not be possible for them to find a way through the barriers at least on their roads leading out of the city. But the Western High Commissioners had little sympathy with this suggestion. On the whole they held themselves aloof, pointing out that their own vehicles had not hitherto been held up. They also refused to use their troops in the Western Zones. They justified this by explaining that they were not trained for police purposes and could only be used, if at all, as soldiers. Matters had not yet reached this stage, of course, and so the whole burden is before all on the shoulders of the Viennese police.

The many hours I had spent hobbling around with my foot in plaster had left me exhausted. But there was simply no time to rest

## BETWEEN LIBERATION AND LIBERTY

In the late afternoon we again met at the Ministry of the Interior and finally agreed to send that night a police force of one hundred and twenty men, armed with rifles and bayonets from the police training school at Wiener Neustadt. But for various reasons their departure was delayed and not before midnight was the company ready to move. In the meantime the appearance of these armed men had a sobering effect on the Communists in Vienna and influenced the situation very favourably. In the evening we met at the residence of the Chancellor but there was not much fresh information.

In the early hours of the morning I was awakened by a call from Oscar Helmer, the Minister of the Interior, who told me what had happened during the night. The policemen had marched into Wiener Neustadt and in a relatively short time cleared the Communists out of the post office and municipal buildings. The Communists had fled in fact without any shots being fired at all. Nevertheless, some of the policemen including the commander of the detachment had been wounded by missiles and blows with iron bars. Hardly had some kind of order been restored than an emissary of the local Russian commander ordered the commander of the police to withdraw from Wiener Neustadt—otherwise Russian troops would move in against the Austrian police. Our detachment was dragged off to the local Russian command post and detained there.

Deeply discouraged, the police returned from Wiener Neustadt in the early hours of Thursday morning. Naturally they could not risk resisting the Russians and had in any case been ordered to give way to Russian force. A very grave situation arose. Shortly after eight o'clock the Cabinet held an emergency meeting. After we had heard the report of the Minister of the Interior I repeated my opinion that if the Russians met with determined resistance they would hardly run the risk of appearing international law-breakers. I therefore advised that an immediate complaint be made to the Allied Council and telegrams of protest dispatched to the four Foreign Ministers. We were feverishly busy the whole morning re-examining the police reports and drafting the notes and telegrams of protest. By one o'clock we had both ready

The letter that went to the four Foreign Ministers, including Vyshinsky, asked for their immediate help as a matter of urgency in enabling the Austrian Government to maintain peace and order in its territory and carry out its obligations under the constitution. We pointed out that this situation had arisen when Communists in the Eastern Zone, disappointed by the lack of response to their call for a general strike, had resorted to violence. But when the Government sent in a detachment of police to help the local security forces maintain order at various points in the Soviet Zone, the local Soviet commander had ordered them to return to Vienna, thus leaving the strikers in illegal possession of certain federal buildings that they had seized.

That same day the Western Foreign Ministers issued vigorous declarations, but as we expected, from the Russians there was no answer. To get a clearer idea of their intentions I summoned Koptelov and gave him an account of the events in Vienna. Neutrality and of the Cabinet's decisions. I added that it was the intention of the Soviet occupying force to support Austrian law-breakers, then we would not only call on all international authorities for help but would also oppose such measures ourselves.

Koptelov said that he had no knowledge of the events at Wiener Neustadt, but he could assure me that Soviet policy was based on strict conformity with the Control Agreement. I had the immediate impression that this remark was more than half true and I transmitted it immediately to the local authorities most affected in Lower Austria and Burgenland. During the afternoon Communist activity visibly decreased.

That evening in the Chancellor's office we celebrated the departure of the American High Commissioner General Keves. Although I thought we had overcome the danger of the concentration of so many Austrian and American authorities in one building located in the centre of Vienna seemed almost rather reckless. But nothing happened. About eleven o'clock we received the news that the Communist strike committee had been broken and called off the general strike. Calming again prevailed everywhere.



## **. . . But Vyshinsky Gives an Assurance**

In the autumn of 1950 my desire to return to the United States and continue my efforts at enlightening American public opinion on our problems was fulfilled. As on my previous trip I met President Truman, who was again full of benevolent interest in our affairs. I also met Dean Acheson, the American Secretary of State, George Perkins, the Under-Secretary of State for European Affairs, and General Marshall, now Secretary of Defence, with all of whom I was able to discuss Austrian problems in detail. In New York I had my first meeting with Walter J. Donnelly, the newly-appointed American Ambassador to Austria.

Whilst in Washington I spoke to the National Press Club where for the first time I proposed that the Austrian question be brought before the United Nations. One could hardly expect anything but a guarded official reaction, for the State Department's plans for Austria were as yet uncompleted. We knew from experience that months at least would be needed to popularise and allow a step of the kind I proposed to reach maturity.

'It may be that we shall have to wait a while until our real liberation is completed by diplomatic negotiations,' I told the National Press Club. 'It may even be conceivable that these diplomatic means, too, may fail completely. In that case we shall have to appeal to the United Nations to help us get rid of the intruder. But we are convinced that sooner or later the United Nations will not only have the desire but also the power to restore freedom, peace and order in a country which belongs to the most ardent adherents of the idea of the United Nations.'

As had been the case four years before, I again thought it advisable to make our problems known to people interested in foreign policy who lived outside New York and Washington. My extensive lecture tour took in Miami, New Orleans, St Louis,

Cincinnati, Buffalo and New York. We travelled by air, staying one or at most two days at each place.

On my return, I had four lectures lined up in New York at the Foreign Policy Association, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Overseas Press Club and Columbia University. In between I visited Trygve Lie, Secretary General of the United Nations, the American delegates to UNO including its chief member, Ambassador Warren Austin and John Foster Dulles, then the Republican adviser to the Secretary of State. We also invited to a luncheon the occupying powers' four permanent representatives to the United Nations: Messrs Chauvel, Jebb, Gross and Malik. Contrary to the received view in Soviet diplomacy, Malik was not at all disinclined to discuss any political problems whatsoever.

A few days later I visited Vyshinsky in Glenn Cove on Long Island, the former residence of Rockefeller. Our conversation lasted well over an hour and, apart from the state treaty, was devoted to the attitude of the Soviet inside Austria. I expressed very definitely our disappointment at Soviet policy since the Paris Conference. Vyshinsky dealt with this in summary in great detail, pointing out that the United States were preparing war against the Soviet Union and thus threatening the solution of every international question. But it is significant he gave me to understand that Soviet policy in Austria was planned on the basis of the *status quo* and we need therefore have no worry about our internal situation. It was still night when I received this important declaration to a Vienna still hectic from the events of October.

On the last Sunday of our visit I was invited by Allen Dulles to spend the week-end with his family at the Piping Rock Club. In the evening there was a huge dinner at which John Foster Dulles and Madame Chauvel were also present. At the end of November we embarked on the *Queen Mary* for Cherbourg.

After a short stay in Paris where I met Robert Schuman, the French Foreign Minister, for a talk on Austrian problems, we returned home at the beginning of December. My first visit was to the doctor, who finally freed my foot from its plaster cast.

Altogether, without including the many lunch and dinner

invitations, I calculated that I had spoken at ten large meetings, made six broadcasts and taken part in ten press conferences.

There was an unmistakable change in the outlook of the American public. Its indifference to foreign problems had yielded to a lively interest in the significance of its own international position. Moreover, the Korean War had made it much more directly aware of the danger to which even such a great power as the United States was exposed. The political climate made it easier to arouse interest in our own problems but at the same time much more difficult of course to compete for supplies with the vast process of rearmament.

In the meantime the military situation in the Far East had changed to the disadvantage of the United Nations, whose troops had to withdraw from the Yalu River with considerable losses. Austria's Communists scented the dawn and raised the cry of victory. We were on the eve of a new campaign of intimidation and in Parliament the Communist spokesman made a violent speech, accusing the Austrian Government of another thorough miscalculation. Our gamble on a quick victory in Korea had now given way to a sober reawakening, he alleged.

I could not allow this to go unanswered. Resistance to Communist aggression in Korea had been a turning point of great historical significance, I replied. Nor did Austrian policy depend on the tactical situation at any given time. The United Nations and the free world had enough reserves to bring their struggle to a victorious conclusion, I added. In the new alignment of forces that was taking place, the free world would emerge the stronger.

Our confidence spread to the population and fear began to disappear. The winter passed off calmly. And those pessimists who in January 1950 had feared new Communist attacks were this time proved wrong.

In Korea also, the situation began to stabilise and even Russia and her satellites seemed to be inclined towards a more circumspect policy. Before long contacts were made between the powers with a view to organising a new Foreign Ministers' Conference. The hope of a *detente* grew enormously, but after a few weeks the tide turned—a circumstance we already knew only too well. The desire

for an understanding began, once to drown in the deep sea of procedure and reservations.

We had naturally made all arrangements to put Austria on the agenda of the Foreign Ministers Conference. The Western powers proposed that it be the first item and after much humming and hawing the Russians also agreed to this but with their usual reservations, of course. At the same time they suggested opening discussions on Trieste. It is obvious that they intended to develop a relationship between the two problems. On three occasions I had talks in Paris on the state treaty with Ambassador Gromyko, the deputy Russian Foreign Minister. Even if the results, as far as our special problem was concerned, are of no great significance, it was still useful to discuss general topics with him. We were at this time almost the only people on this side of the Iron Curtain who regularly sought diplomatic discussions with the Soviet. For the first time we gained the impression that Soviet diplomacy was seeking a new balance in its foreign policy. There was nothing artificial about this concern although it could be exaggerated to suppose that Russia had entered on a diplomatic withdrawal and was therefore ready to offer far-reaching concessions.

But during our second conversation I became convinced that Gromyko was not in such a hurry to start the conference. Up till then Western diplomats had assumed that the Russians were unusually interested in it and would enter it eagerly. Our Minister Kleinwachter reported for example from Washington. In political circles here it is thought that your analysis of the Soviet attitude is too pessimistic. It is thought that Gromyko has been instructed to bring about the conference come what may. Therefore existing differences will be bridled over.

For the present, however, it is better to think we would be in the right. After many months, negotiations were broken off and it was assumed that a period of international tension would ensue. But that is not the case at all. On the contrary Jacob Malik, the Soviet delegate to the Security Council took diplomacy a stage further by suggesting that the situation in Korea be immediately brought to an end. Again, hopes soared but again it became clear

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how premature they were when even the negotiations over Korea dragged on. We ourselves had never doubted that a long, long road lay ahead before the Russians would realise that their delaying tactics were out of date. For the moment we decided to wait calmly, in the awareness that the fate of the Korean War must inevitably have an enormous influence on the treatment of every other question.

How were we to assess future developments? We had always been realistic in our view of the relations between the Soviets and the West. Those wearisome discussions on whether fear or aggressiveness explained the Russian attitude always seemed very academic to us. Communist ideology is aggressively disposed towards the West, expressed by fear when it is weaker and by aggressiveness when it is stronger. Its hostility to the principles of the free world is neither racially based nor can it be explained solely by the existence of two different philosophies. It originates primarily in the contradictions of the two systems. A dictatorship based on the dedication by radio and press of its leaders can only with difficulty tolerate the idea that outside its territory they are denuded of their divine appearance and even consciously defiled. The danger that arises from the contact of two such different systems is the basis of their unsatisfactory external relations.

Every dictatorship has a wrong conception of state power in exaggerating the efficacy of coercive means on its citizens. The better the masses are fed and the more stable the international situation, so much the fewer means of coercion are needed to uphold the stability of any system. It is astounding how little force is required to eliminate public criticism or even rebellion in the modern state. The vast power alone is never a guarantee of stability in a crisis, for it is itself dependent to too great a degree on the allegiance of citizens.

Communist ideology is a fanatic belief. And an essential characteristic of fanaticism is the fact that its aims must be achieved, regardless of the cost. Not for nothing does the argument repeatedly turn up in Communist writings that the permanent bliss of success justifies an interim period of inevitable sacrifice.

In this fundamental difference between East and West lie the



possibilities and the limitations of a diplomatic settlement. The idea of negotiating from a position of strength certainly looks basically correct but it must never be imagined that it will make it possible for *any aim whatsoever* to be achieved. The strength can always be only relative. It can never be in the proportion of ten to one but at best two to one. A fanatic and militant ideology will not yield to the argument of superiority in itself, no matter how much cool political calculation acts as a damper. Thus only certain limited aims can be attained by negotiating from a position of strength—but one of them is certainly a rehabilitation of Central Europe. Beyond that the imagination has free play. After a certain period of unchanged conditions perhaps, difficulties in the Soviet's satellite states will accumulate and the attraction of Western values may grow, when once the shadow of Soviet grip shortens. But any exaggerated hope for developments along these lines belongs rather to the realm of political fantasy than to that of realistic analysis. On the other hand, human affairs never stand still and the passage of time often changes a political system beyond all recognition.



## De Gasperi and Tito

The South Tyrol was ever our problem-child where relations with Italy were concerned. The Italian officials were always trying to 'improve' our agreements by modifying them in a sense favourable to Italy, or even to render them invalid. The procedure with former Italian citizens who declared their willingness to re-acquire Italian nationality, despite Italian reluctance to accept them, dragged on interminably and gave rise to no end of disputes. These seldom went deep enough to broaden out into genuine conflicts but they did at least oblige us to take steps to ensure that the agreements were kept and the mood in both the North and South Tyrol held in check. This meant frequent pilgrimages to Rome.

But in 1952 the reason for my visit to Italy was a programme of lectures in Rome and Milan, organised by the Italian Society for International Relations. Their general theme was the problem of relations between Europe and the Soviets and I hoped they would reveal, factually and methodically, the real issues at stake. A confidential discussion in the *Circolo di Roma* dealt with internal Austrian problems, such as our relationship to the occupying powers and to the Communists.

I was also looking forward to general talks on our economic relations with Italy, for we had latterly been studying a far-reaching project that provided for a system of mutual customs concessions. Italian economic policy, in fact, had recently taken up the old idea of joining the two countries more closely together by means of a special customs régime. We sympathised with the plan, although the nature of the goods that we exchanged spoke against it, for both countries lacked agricultural surpluses and coal. But even though the two economies were not complementary the idea more and more gained ground that an increase in the size of the internal market would bring important advantages by lowering industrial costs and economising in raw materials. In Rome we discussed the

project in detail and agreed to establish a mixed commission to examine and clarify the whole complex of questions from the legal, political and economic angle.

Thus Italy was entitled to claim at least one success in these discussions for her interest in the plan was undoubted. Marginally, we also touched on the Trieste situation but no obvious solution emerged. Italian policy was clearly disinclined to drop its claim to Zone B.<sup>1</sup> At this time my Austrian visit to Yugoslavia is only a nebulous prospect, otherwise Trieste might have been given more weight in our discussions. We also did not want to make ourselves completely dependent on Rome in any eventual initiative we might take in establishing normal relations with Yugoslavia.

Soon after we had crossed the Italian frontier on our way to Rome, Italian mobile police started to follow us, much to our dismay. This was all the greater in the beautiful Italian countryside, but we managed to give them the slip by turning off sharply to the right into the old fortress town of Udine. Freedom at last, I thought, until we ran into them again on leaving Udine. At each exit from the town they had thoughtfully stationed one of their men, who had an indulgent smile for our little escapade.

We tried another method and invited our protectors to lunch. A long palaver began but they were sympathetic and his hostile to red tape as we were. Soon afterwards they jumped on to their machines and disappeared southward. Of course, when we needed the help of a mayor a little afterwards it was difficult to deny the report that Il Ministro had moved in to make an hour go.

The importance of this official visit was underlined by the signature of the first Austro-Italian cultural agreement. A hand shake with de Gasperi and kind words exchanged against the background of the Palazzo Chigi—it all made a nice picture, but the actual discussions did not go so smoothly. De Gasperi was in a reproachful mood. 'You come back again and again with new proposals and new demands,' he complained. 'You have to bear your grievances in mind? We can understand that to some extent but hasn't Italy also got a public opinion to consider?' he asked significantly.

<sup>1</sup> Zone A contains Trieste itself and its immediate neighbourhood. Zone B, the hinterland of the city in the direction of Yugoslavia. (Translator's note.)

The Premier and his colleagues then delivered a long lecture on the complex legal and administrative machinery of the Italian parliamentary system. He was trying to justify, of course, the often painful slowness with which Italy settled our requests. Even so, we were able to make some progress.

The case of Dr Tinzi, who was one of the petitioners for Italian citizenship, mentioned earlier, developed into a test-case for the relations between the autonomous province of Bozen and Italy.<sup>1</sup> Here we were not promised a final settlement until after interminable Italian delays so frequent in such cases. When I once tackled Count Sforza, the then Italian Foreign Minister, on behalf of Tinzi, he said he could not understand my question at all. He, Sforza, was *'un Tinzelista per questione di principio'* – a passionate Tinzelist on principle, for it would be a sad day when Italy was afraid to welcome a new citizen. But the upshot was one of these unpopular compromises which almost always emerge when two countries haggle over details. Anyway, we were both happy to make some progress and public opinion was warmly gratified.

On this visit I saw Count Sforza again but this time he was confined to his sick bed. He was no longer able to play any part in politics, although his mind was as lively as ever.

Another reminder of the past was my meeting with an Italian senator who had nothing but praise for the quality of the old Austrian administration in upper Italy. 'The tradition of that administration is still alive,' he said, 'which is astounding when you think that it was in the fight against it that Italian patriotism developed.'

From Rome to Belgrade. There were good reasons for a visit to Yugoslavia and we had long borne them in mind. Our frontiers were quiet and since the dramatic Yugoslav exit from the Cominform there had hardly been any further incidents in the South. It seemed more than worth while to try to make this happy situation permanent by taking the first steps to solving the problems obstructing fully normal relations. Some were most urgent, such

<sup>1</sup> Dr Tinzi was one of the leaders of the German-speaking population of the South Tyrol. Considered a Tyrolean nationalist by the Italians, they were reluctant to permit him to re-acquire Italian citizenship. (Translator's note.)

the return of those Austrian prisoners-of-war who had been condemned to long prison sentences by Yugoslav courts, the resumption of the exchange of goods and movement of personnel between the border zones, together with the associated problem of Austrian property in Yugoslavia (and vice versa) and finally a revival of economic relations.

But above and beyond the importance of these separate topics was the vital political necessity of cordial Austro-Yugoslav relations. If ever the post-war world were to introduce then settled relations between our two countries — and this one of the most important elements of future stability — there had been no lack of preliminary contacts before our visit, but we had always postponed actually going to Belgrade lest this jeopardize further negotiations on the state treaty. Only the refusal of the Soviet Union to put in an appearance at the London Conference which interfered that negotiations would not be resumed — and we came to us to anticipate that no harm could come from an encounter with the Yugoslavs. In any case, the exchange of notes on the 'short treaty' was the end of the attempts to conclude a basic treaty in a hurry.<sup>1</sup>

During our preliminary contacts with the Yugoslavs we had never expected that the announcement of an Austrian visit to Belgrade would lead to a sharp Italian reaction. Why were they so sensitive? The answer was — France. The no entry of troops into Zones A and B was the result of an Italian-West German-Russian favoring Yugoslavia, at that time a member of the Soviet bloc — and the Western powers, Italy. The military situation had easily changed of course, played a large part in the final decision. Not even before the defection of Yugoslavia from the East in 1948 the Western powers in 1948 had promised Italy Zone B although this was not occupied by them but by Yugoslavia. The decision was of course, mainly intended as a measure of internal protection for the Italian Government. But it soon became clear that opportunist declarations in foreign policy often encourage themselves to be dangerous dump squibs.

<sup>1</sup> The short treaty only provided for a visit and left many points unsettled. The other points in dispute were left to be discussed later (De Gasperi's note).

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After the defection of Yugoslavia from the Eastern bloc the Western powers' declaration on Trieste became highly embarrassing to their policy in South-Eastern Europe. Italy believed, or at least affected to believe, that the moment had now come to relieve Yugoslavia of Zone B and thus redeem the Western promise. But Yugoslavia had, of course, no intention of withdrawing from Zone B. The Italian politicians would willingly have backed this formula: no agreement with Yugoslavia and, above all, no material aid until the Trieste question is settled. But this proposal met with little sympathy from Italy's Western friends. On the contrary, the latter, and especially the British, tried to mediate, for the Yugoslavs might possibly have been ready to accept a compromise solution. The following variations were envisaged:

- (a) a free state in accordance with the peace treaties, i.e. an Italo-Yugoslav condominium
- (b) recognition of the *status quo* with partition of Trieste along the zonal boundaries
- (c) partition of the territory with simultaneous frontier revision, Capod'Istria to go to Italy and the Slovene areas around Trieste to Yugoslavia

All three variations were rejected by Italy in the hope that she would gradually gain possession of the whole of Trieste.

As soon as our contact with Belgrade became known publicly, the Palazzo Chigi was obviously afraid that this might lead to harnessing Austria behind the free state solution. In our projected visit Rome saw the influence of the British who did not enjoy any great popularity in Italy. Although these fears were unjustified, we had great difficulty in reassuring the Italians, and in the end we had officially to declare that Rome would be fully informed of the aim and scope of the conversations—in which Trieste would not be included. To give added weight to this declaration we invited all the Italian journalists in Vienna to a special reception to win them over to interpret correspondingly the aims of our visit.

But despite everything a certain ill humour still prevailed for a long time between Rome and Vienna. Only months later did a visit from Paolo Livigni, the Italian Under-Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs, provide an opportunity to clear away the after-effects of our misunderstanding.

Jugoslav aircraft obviously could not fly to Vienna in the Russian Zone, so 'Jat', the Yugoslav state airline, had a two-engined machine made ready for us in Graz. This was a useful place for us to change, for the provinces of Styria and Carinthia could be the ones most immediately affected by the issues it dealt with Yugoslavia. Styrian industry, in particular, has important markets to the south-east. Thus we were highly gratified when Josip Krumer, governor of the province of Styria, arranged for our party to meet local authorities and business people. This gave us a clear picture of the hopes and wishes of those circles who would be most interested in our Belgrade talks. It also strengthened the prestige of the local authorities and the population if the central government should take note of their views before opening important conversations affecting their interests. During our conversations in Graz, a member of the Carinthian provincial government represented that much-disputed province.

We left Graz in the late afternoon and reached in the early evening at Semlin airport in Yugoslavia. The Belgrade Chief of Protocol had obviously set high hopes on seeing that day, the first more important state visit since Moscow. His plans did not run in accordance with the best traditions of diplomatic protocol. But what a blow when it began with a slight *contretemps*. My first fears were aroused as we taxied across the airport. I knew Tito of course, from the many pictures I had seen of him. I knew also the Yugoslav foreign affairs experts. But kindly the Foreign Minister could not be present owing to a serious operation and he was to be welcomed in his stead by Djilas the Minister of State. But what did Djilas look like? My apprehension grew as I realised that the airport reception is the one that gets the most publicity. What if we shook the hand of an airport mechanic or enterer, leaving a Minister of State out in the cold? I made a quick decision and asked Victor Repic, the Yugoslav Minister to Vienna, to lead the way down the narrow gangway. This made confusion worse confounded. Djilas did not know Repic from Adam. I took him for the Austrian Foreign Minister and shook him most warmly by the

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hand, all the while expressing the usual good wishes. The photographers lost no time in taking their shots and racing back to their editors. In an astonishingly short time Djilas and Repic were prominent on the front page of *Politika*—a brace of friendly Ministers, from two neighbouring countries. The Chief of Protocol was inconsolable and Repic received a rip over the knuckles. It cost me no little effort to explain that I was the real villain of the piece. In the end everybody agreed to treat the incident as a joke.

The Yugoslav Government had found us accommodation in a magnificent villa above the Sava River and a young official of the Foreign Office was always at our disposal. But we did not stay long in our country retreat—we wanted to see Yugoslavia.

It is a country of contrasts—the strange case of a social system whose rigid Communist beginnings are gradually being liberalised. Externally, Belgrade hardly gives the impression of being a Communist capital. It is orderly, the shops are functioning normally and any shortage of goods must have been limited to certain districts which we did not have time to visit.

We were surprised by the behaviour of the population. On a weekday in Moscow it was difficult to find even ten thousand Soviet citizens simply enjoying themselves. But every day of the week in Belgrade the Sava swarmed with thousands of people enjoying a refreshing dip in the heat of the afternoon. How we envied them! The heat was unbearable during our talks in the Belgrade Foreign Office and every time we left the conference room we were literally bathed in perspiration. Outside it was hardly any cooler. Hence our urge riverwards.

Dr Sloven Smodlika, the much distressed Chief of Protocol, organised our swimming expeditions. We had to travel about half an hour upstream to the so-called Diplomats' Pool, an undisturbed spot far from the hubbub lower down. Then a smart motor boat would take us back to a place near town where a car with our clothes would be waiting. The system worked well until one day the engine of the motor boat cut out and we were left to the mercy of the gentle waters of the Sava. Our young 'diplomatic watchdog' from the Belgrade Foreign Office turned deathly pale and shouted to the poor pilot. But all to no avail. Without further explanation



He jumped overboard and swam to a nearby island in the river. That seemed to me the best solution also and soon we were making for the shore. After wading through a mud bank, whence we emerged black from top to toe, we reached the island safely. We followed our leader's moist traces to the other side of the island where we came upon one of the mass bathing centers. Thousands of swimmers stared at us in alarm as we emerged from the island's undergrowth looking rather like Red Indians. Only after a cleansing dip were we once more presentable.

Our stay in Belgrade was mostly taken up with receptions, dinners and all the coming and going of a statesman. But there was enough serious work as well of which the most important item was the movement of goods and personnel in the frontier area and the associated problem of Austrian property in Yugoslavia. In effect, Yugoslavia had requisitioned Austrian property and the draft of the state treaty did indeed entitle her to claim this as compensation for her concessions over frontiers and frontiersmen. The draft of the new short treaty, however, contained no provisions on this score. To preserve her rights Belgrade was therefore planning to send a note to the three Western powers. We had difficulty in making it clear to the Yugoslavs that we could not tolerate such a procedure. But in the end they said they would leave their draft note in its pigeon hole and thus clear the way for a bilateral agreement over Austrian property. We finally signed an agreement which helped at least some of the Austrian owners to regain their property. With all its limitations we had made a breach in an important decree. Austrians were once again in full control of their property.

Of course, a wide *tour d'horizon* accompanied our negotiations on the individual items. We were particularly interested in the Yugoslav attitude to Russia for had not the politicians of Belgrade for years worked closely with the Moscow high ups. Their judgement was anything but friendly. A spokesman summed it up pithily by saying that present day Russia had nothing in common with Socialism, that her policy was imperialist and only aimed at imposing on other countries a new form of colonialism. The Yugoslavs were more than sceptical about the Austrian treaty. From many

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anecdotes we noticed that their differences with the Russians were not only doctrinal but were far oftener to be found in the Yugoslav will to freedom and in the vast difference in the social development and standard of living of the two countries.

As an illustration of this, one Yugoslav official told us of a highly placed Russian who exclaimed 'Kulak!' every time he saw electric light burning in a peasant's house on his journey through Croatia. Evidently only kulaks had had electricity in revolutionary Russia. But in Croatia and Slovenia electric light in town and country has been burning for more decades than the Communist regime in Russia has lasted.

We were curious to know Belgrade's opinion of Stalin's health. In reply we were told a little story. A foreigner travelling through Georgia visited the centennial mayor of a small Caucasian mountain village. As they walked together through the village they heard terrible screams, which aroused the curiosity of the foreign visitor. But the mayor answered, 'Don't worry, that's only my father beating his wife.' Stalin was clearly not carved from such tough mountain timber—he died a year later of an apoplectic stroke.

When our discussions were over we travelled by night to Abbazia and from there to Brioni, where Marshal Tito was to receive us. A brand new dining car, equipped with every possible convenience, was put at our disposal and the two State Secretaries at the Foreign Office, who were to accompany us as far as Trieste, had soon organised a sumptuous dinner that did honour to the best traditions of Slav hospitality. Glasses were soon raised high. We found out why our travelling companions were going to Slovenia—they had to explain to the local co-operatives that on the basis of the imminent agreement with Austria part of the requisitioned properties in the frontier area would have to be returned. The task seems to have been no pleasant one, for when we met them on the following day at Brioni they were not exactly in the best of moods.

Our rest in Abbazia gave us the opportunity we needed to draw up a more precise report of the Belgrade conversations and harmonise it with the Yugoslavs. Our experts were so busy that we had to stagger our acceptances of the Chief of Protocol's invitation to visit the famous Monte Maggiore. The first groups were

just ascending when the first were on the way down to relieve them, which somewhat disorganised our mountain climbing. Nevertheless, even if only in small groups we paid just as sincere a tribute to the culinary achievement of the Chief of Protocol as we did to the view over the Dalmatian Fjords.

Ever since the days of Kupčević, Brijuni has preserved its magic undisturbed. Green fields and woods form a conspicuous contrast with the bare landscape of the opposite shore. The few hotels had been restored in the little puppet State that our accommodation was first class. Shortly after our arrival we were being driven in a coach drawn by two graceful horses to the Muihal villa. The reception was friendly and we were in no danger. Marshal Tito spoke German fluently and my Vienna and Slav origin. Our conversation was less concerned with political and Yugoslav matters than with general political problems: the danger of war, European unity and not least relations with our neighbours.

Tito still in Stalin's court in 1947, and I thought the old man cautious and cunning. Until he had helped to let Russia might perhaps involve her in a full adventure. But he lived in any hazardous acts of imperial aggression. Tito believed principally on efforts at European union.

His attitude to Trieste was very precise. Jugoslavia would not relinquish one inch of soil to Italy but was always ready to seek a solution acceptable to both parties. Italy, however, must cease looking on the Yugoslavs or the Slovenian people as medieval second-class nations. In his opinion Jugoslavia was undertaking rapid industrial development, now that the main mistakes of the 1930s which they had been told by the Germans were being dropped and doctrinal ballast thrown overboard. This intention was confirmed by our Minister. In many fields private initiative was beginning to stir again.

The Marshal proved himself an excellent host. We were impressed not only by the quality of the food served but also by the excellent service. Tito personally took the trouble to show us

<sup>1</sup> The Kupčevićs were wealthy Austro-Hungarian owners who opened up Brijuni to tourists at the beginning of the twentieth century. (Translator's note.)

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the beauties of Brioni and after the official dinner he drove us in a jeep to see his wild deer and antelopes, of whom there are said to be some eight hundred living on the island in perfect freedom. Despite the bright headlights, they were not afraid to wander slowly across our path.

The next day we went pheasant shooting. Although my hunting experience is not very extensive I did succeed in bagging three birds. This mediocre score was nothing compared to the Marshal's, whose Nimrod-like reputation is well known. Afterwards he drove us in his fast motor launch to the old naval harbour of Pola and then to a small island with a fabulous beach. We were followed all the time by a gunboat, its anti-aircraft guns at the ready, to protect the Marshal from any hostile incidents – a precaution that the ruthlessness of his enemies certainly justified. Besides a magnificent swim in the deep blue Adriatic we had a picnic of a type all its own. Fried fish, prepared in an unfamiliar way with *Cecapici* and *Srblak* were delicacies that till then we had only known from hearsay. In this informal atmosphere many a question could be broached which we had both steered clear of discussing at the conference table.

All too soon, this idyllic pastoral existence had to be broken off, for a press conference was about to begin. It was also time to draft the final communiqué and pack our belongings. At six o'clock that evening we were already high over Istria on the homeward flight.

## The Short Treaty: a Diplomatic Intermezzo

<sup>1</sup>The Soviet's refusal to answer any of our numerous notes dealing with the 'dried perdebis' made it less than thing quite clear unless they changed their policy there was no hope of an early conclusion of the state treaty.

The year 1951 had passed without any noticeable contacts between the powers where the state treaty was concerned. We now had to think about reactivating the whole business by introducing new ideas, new dynamic factors in order at the very least to bring Austria far enough into the general picture to ensure that her special political, economic and imminent interests received their due attention. It is unhappily true, but to qualify for help on any scale at all one has to attract the world's attention and occupy a definite position in the sequence of current problems.

Some time earlier the American Government had worked out a draft treaty that contained only a few articles and in essence limited itself to measures providing for the evacuation of Austria. This draft the Americans called the 'short treaty'. In effect, it was a harking back to those ideas which we ourselves originally had visualised as a favourable *point of departure* for negotiation with the great powers.

The legal basis of the new treaty was this: through the formation of an Austrian Government in 1945 and its subsequent international recognition Austria again had in existence in international law and was therefore only in need of a treaty which would secure the orderly evacuation of the occupation forces. The American State Department had long made this view its own but the American Government insisted that in the agreement the great powers renounce their claims to German assets in Austria. This alone seemed to the State Department to guarantee our free and independent existence.

But with this addition the short treaty lost its character as a mere

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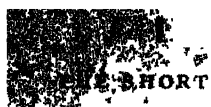
protocol of evacuation and became a genuine treaty for the settlement of the concrete issues at stake between the great powers and Austria. There could of course be no hope of the Soviet Union accepting a clause of this kind. But it did at least show them that they could not hope to preserve for ever the long treaty embodying the numerous concessions made to them in 1949. They would now have to realise that their delaying tactics might cost them possible future economic advantages in Austria.

It was also necessary as far as our Parliament was concerned, to change the basis of the treaty. Parliamentary freedom of decision had to be restored, for who could foresee how a new Parliament, in possibly a transformed international situation, would react to the concessions made to Russia and the burdens assumed in 1949? It is monstrous to conclude in the year  $x$  an agreement that does not become effective before the year  $x$  plus 5, or  $x$  plus 10. This freedom of decision was restored by the Western proposal for a short treaty.

Where our population was concerned, however, the official announcement was tantamount to the admission that there was no longer any hope of any quick progress over the original treaty. We had to balance tactical gains against psychological losses. This was why we thought it necessary to give the Russians one more chance of making their views known. Accordingly on 19th January 1952 an invitation to open new negotiations was sent to the Soviet Union. Moscow's reply was laconic and to the point. Addressed to Mr Downing, Secretary General of the Conference of Foreign Ministers, Deputies it ran:

Dear Mr Downing

In connection with your letter of the 19th January, the Soviet delegation considers it necessary to state that, as formerly, it considers that the question of the Austrian treaty cannot be examined independently of the fulfilment by the Austrian Government of the decisions of the four powers on the demilitarisation and denazification of Austria and of the question of the fulfilment by the Governments of Great Britain, the U.S.A. and France of their obligations according to the peace treaty



with Italy in that part which concerns the Free Territory of Trieste. Your answer to the letter of the Soviet delegation, which was received on the 19th January requires study. In view of this the Soviet representative will not be able to attend the meeting of the Deputies on the 21st January.

Yours sincerely,  
C. L. D. W. Jerof jew

This cold reply proved that Russia was not even prepared to take any part at all in further discussion on the treaty, which made any further psychological precautions unnecessary. The population could see for itself that no rapid result was likely. Now was the right moment to bring forward the short treaty. In a few weeks later, on 28th February, the Western powers sent identical notes to Moscow proposing that it become a new basis for discussion. By Article 5 both the Soviet Union and the Western powers were to renounce any claim to German assets in Austria—which would have been the chief solution to our problems. As we had foreseen, Moscow did not intend to accept this new proposal. However, the Americans tried to put it to rest and from that moment Moscow began to veer for the earlier short treaty like a bee for honey. Suddenly the Soviets were ready to talk—but on the basis of the old treaty.

On its own, the short treaty was an unimpressive means to reactivate negotiations that had lain dormant for so long. We therefore planned to complement it by an appeal to the United Nations that would mobilise world public opinion in support of our cause.

Our first step was to prepare Parliament for the new move. The preliminary announcement had already provoked lively debate. The Communists tried to persuade the population that Austria threatened to become a second Korea and the Cominform spent vast sums in trying to divert moves that it opposed to Russian policy. Soon posters appeared in the streets of Vienna contrasting the long and the short treaty, with the obvious intention of plunging us into a state of hysteria and fear. The long treaty symbolised peace—but over the short treaty hovered death with his scythe.

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The Cominform was hoping for mass demonstrations against our foreign policy. They wasted their money. All the campaign achieved was to show us how hostile the Russians were to any discussion by the United Nations of Austrian problems.

Nor was this incomprehensible, for the Soviets' obvious delaying tactics did not fit in at all with their general call of peace and understanding. But were we not for that very reason entitled to assume that a debate at the United Nations might have a salutary effect on the Soviet attitude? At the least we might expect that the Red Army would impose on itself the greatest of care lest any renewed tension inside Austria provoke a dispute with the United Nations.

In any case the right psychological moment had now come to obtain parliamentary sanction to take our case to Lake Success. The parliamentary debate both on this topic and the short treaty also gave us the chance to expose the propaganda of the Communists and to confirm that the true responsibility for the delay in concluding the state treaty was that of the Soviet Union.

The Russians tried to obscure the real state of affairs and by various pretexts to suggest that they had not abruptly rejected negotiations in January. But despite this attempted diversion, deputies did not allow themselves to be intimidated. Apart, of course, from the Communists, the House unanimously approved the action of the Austrian Government and gave its sanction to an appeal to the United Nations.



## **We Appeal to the United Nations . . .**

**A visit from Dean Acheson, the American Secretary of State, enabled us to clarify the details of our appeal to the United Nations. The Americans at first looked on the idea with a certain amount of reserve, but they eventually agreed with us that the appropriate moment to bring the case before the United Nations would be at the forthcoming General Assembly in the autumn of 1952. Even though the United Nations could at this time hardly be expected to produce any genuine solution to the problem of the treaty – if the use of force was excluded, as of course it was – various factors made it essential that something at least be attempted during 1952.**

However much the obvious and universal lack of interest in our problems could be explained by the fact that negotiations had been at a standstill for over a year, this state of affairs still represented a danger to the country both 'internally' and 'externally'. Once the world began to get accustomed to the lack of settlement, then a situation would arise best described by the legal term – 'ownership through lapse of time'. Internally, there was the danger that popular resistance to the cold-blooded Sovietisation of the Eastern Zone might begin to weaken. We not only had to gather as many non-Communist votes as possible, we also had to keep alive the vigilance and defensive will-power of the population. We of the Western Zones had a special duty to fulfil in upholding our faith in the future of Austria.

In 1951 there had only been a slim chance of resuming negotiations. For 1953, the possibilities looked rosier. Was 1952 therefore not the right year to bridge over the gap by an appeal to the United Nations? In no other country probably did that organisation enjoy higher moral authority than in Austria.

The state visits of Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, and of Maurice Schuman, the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, gave us the opportunity we needed to consult with

them on our future moves. The British were afraid lest there be a violent Soviet reaction which would worsen our position in the long run. We did not share these fears, convinced as we were, that it was not the Soviet custom to wage a war of nerves with powder and shot. But in the end the Western powers reserve gave way to a more positive attitude and we could proceed with the organisation of our appeal. That section of our public opinion that had shown a certain reluctance at our imminent *démarche* also now came to see that it would genuinely further Austrian interests. Even so, a prominent colleague in the government noted on one of the actual documents while our United Nations campaign was under way:

Let us hope the world gives us the necessary support — otherwise we shall be worse off than when we began. This was a risk we had to take. But we of the Foreign Ministry had confidence in the free world, a confidence confirmed by the preliminary steps we had taken.

On 31st July 1952 we inaugurated our appeal to the United Nations by sending to every government in the world a memorandum that described our position in the light of the occupation policies hitherto pursued and outlined, in its essentials, the course of negotiations on the state treaty. This was an important factor in preparing both diplomats and public opinion for the future handling of the Austrian question. For there were far off states that had only a very nebulous idea of our circumstances. Their foreign office officials and their delegates at the United Nations were in particular need of a clear presentation of our case. Our memorandum evidently hit the target for it was favourably received and stimulated widespread interest in Austria, to such an extent that we soon had our hands full in dealing with all the requests for additional material.

We followed up this formal *démarche* by making closer contact politically with the various foreign offices most concerned and by canvassing our views with those leading powers on which we could probably count for support. There was no time to lose, for it was already summer and the Austrian question had to be placed before the United Nations by the end of September at the latest. At first the great powers were not too enthusiastic about our intentions.

but they eventually realised that to give the Austrian population their moral support was a most necessary task if our position was to be held at all. Nobody with any knowledge of the situation could deny that world-wide interest in Austria existed, but because of great benefit to the unhindered working of the international machinery. Finally, we got to the stage where each power had to support it from all the leading powers in the world. It was a high power or a group of powers should formally take the initiative in bringing the matter before the United Nations. The United States had shown that it would be inappropriate for any one of the big powers to take a direct initiative which would put it in a position of suspended animation in the world.

We also thought it preferable that the initiative should be taken by a state that did not belong to the Atlantic Pact or the United Nations appeal seem rather more likely to succeed. If the states to whom they were themselves parties to the treaty of alliance and defence could not well complain at their failure to act until they were determined to liquidate the negotiating process, it was only fair to the United Nations any future discussion in Vienna. But the question of this kind was rather a matter of internal affairs. We were determined to accelerate the mobilisation of public opinion behind Austria and not to set a precedent for a power to do so.

Of those powers that were outside the Atlantic Pact, Brazil and India both enjoyed a special status. But both had also determined to preserve her neutrality. It was clear that India was in a position that she could hardly take the initiative in a matter which had no regional interest and which might be regarded as a challenge to Moscow. Brazil therefore would have to take the initiative. Her relations with the United States were, at the best, yet she was sufficiently independent of Washington policy to be able to appear before the United Nations in support of her own right. Moreover, the authority of the Brazilian representative at the United Nations stood very high, and his word to carry great weight.

These reflections did not in any way exclude our intensified efforts to ensure Indian support. The confidence of a leading power whose neutrality in the East-West conflict is beyond all

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doubt must inevitably be of special help to the Austrian cause. These were the reflections that persuaded us to inaugurate a dual policy. The request to Brazil to support us at the United Nations could probably only be made during an Austrian state visit to the President of the Brazilian Republic. We took up a private Brazilian suggestion made some time earlier to visit the country – but not, of course, before we had adequately informed Rio of our intentions.

The political director of our Foreign Office was also despatched to New Delhi to gain the support of the Indian Government. Both Premier Nehru and his colleagues welcomed him most cordially. But our request that they share in the Austrian initiative met with the answer that we had at bottom expected – the Indian Foreign Office informed our envoy that despite their undoubted sympathy for the cause of Austria – had not India had to fight for decades for her own independence – and despite the abundant justification of our desire for freedom, they could not decide to take the initiative in what was purely a European matter. India was involved in numerous extra-European matters already, for example, in Korea, South Africa and Tunis and Morocco. But the visit was not made in vain. India not only assured us of her support when another state took the initiative but also declared herself ready to sound out Moscow, as soon as the time was ripe. This last phrase could hardly be understood otherwise than to mean that India did not yet consider the time ripe to make contact on these lines. We ourselves were also of this opinion.

An Austrian visit to Brazil would have great economic importance apart from its immediate political value. The South American continent is an ideal market for Austrian goods and one which is bound to expand in view of its vast areas of still undeveloped territories. These were my thoughts when on 25th July we left for Rio de Janeiro via Zurich, Lisbon, Dakar and Recife.

Our reception in Rio was most cordial, perhaps because my visit was the first that a European politician had made for a long time. But it was also a proof of the sympathy enjoyed by the sorely tried Austrian people whose cultural achievements were well to the fore in Brazil. The high spots of our stay in Rio were a visit to the

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President of the Republic, Getulio Vargas,<sup>1</sup> and a state reception in Itamarati, the Brazilian Foreign Office, which has reception rooms that might well be envied by any state in the world. They are arranged around an enormous courtyard in the middle of which is a huge pond surrounded by dozens of lofty palm trees whose fronds blend with the darkness of the night.

The great state reception was inaugurated by my being presented with a high Brazilian order—the Cruzeiro do Sul. This was followed by a dinner, attended by over two hundred celebrities as well as by numerous members of the Brazilian Government. As a polite gesture I had prepared a part of my speech in Portuguese. It was welcomed enthusiastically by my Brazilian hosts although my pronunciation was probably anything but correct. However, a Brazilian newspaper was polite enough to describe the speech as *'brilhante'*.

Our discussions were held in the Foreign Office with the Foreign Minister, Neves De Fontoura, and his colleagues. These gentlemen, and especially the Political Director, Henrique de Souza Gomes, proved to be well informed of our position and agreed to sponsor the Austrian resolution without any diplomatic reservations. But they reserved to themselves the right to sound out various leading states on its eventual reception.

These discussions were rounded off by a detailed exchange of views on our economic relations. In both spheres we reached important results which were later confirmed in a shorter discussion with President Vargas. The Brazilian acceptance of our policy *vis-à-vis* the United Nations was all the more significant for it ensured the backing of the South American states which form the most important voting block in the full Assembly.

Our return journey by sea took ten days—the only ten days of peace and quiet that we were to enjoy in the whole of that agitated year. At the end of August we were back in Vienna, ready to plunge with all eagerness into the preparatory work for the actual execution of our appeal to the United Nations.

<sup>1</sup> In August 1954 after this was written President Vargas committed suicide (Translator's note.)

## . . . And Succeed

At the beginning of September Ambassador Muniz, Brazilian delegate to the United Nations, sent a note to the Secretary-General in the name of his Government expressing the wish that the Austrian question be put on the agenda of the General Assembly. Simultaneously we pursued joint efforts to win the support of other member states for the Brazilian motion. This did not so much emphasise the legal competence of the United Nations in the solution of the Austrian question but rather its moral duty to give its full attention to a situation that threatened peace and good-neighbourly relations and to give Austria moral and political help in a solemn appeal to the treaty-making powers.

After some reflection, Holland, the Lebanon and Mexico came forward as co-sponsors of the resolution, thereby ensuring that all geographical areas were represented. Even before the beginning of the debate, Mexico, true to her tradition, had declared that she would give energetic support to any initiative in the Austrian question and during the actual debate the Mexican delegates were always most helpful. The General Assembly, against the votes of the Eastern bloc, approved the placing of the Austrian question on the agenda for the autumn session.

The Political Committee, to which the Austrian question together with eight other items was passed for consideration, originally decided to take it first. But as the General Assembly met only a few weeks before the American Presidential elections, we feared that only slight interest in Austria could be expected and even that the significance of the whole United Nations session would be overshadowed by the choice between Eisenhower and Stevenson. We had to ask our friends to put our item lower on the agenda.

We succeeded only too well—Austria was made item six and Korea item one. We had fallen from the frying-pan into the fire!

For various reasons the discussion on Korea dragged on so long that we soon feared that Austria would not be discussed at all at this session of the Council and not even before a possible new year session. But who could tell when this would be or even hazard a guess at the future international atmosphere-

The Indian government was trying in all earnestness to solve the Korean conflict within the framework of the United Nations. Its representative, Krishna Menon, had first to spend several weeks in overcoming American mistrust of his proposal for mediation. Although no one really believed that the solution of the Korean question could at this time be reached on the basis of a resolution, the American delegates again and again suggested changes or demanded more precise details. After wearisome discussions, when the West was finally ready to approve the Indian resolution, the Russians in one brusque gesture threw the whole of the mediation proposal overboard. The Indian delegation was dismissed. For the first time perhaps they felt that in understanding with the Russians would not be very easy. The following item on the agenda also proved to be much more complicated than had originally been assumed—and time was getting short.

The Arab world supported by India and the Asiatic group of states, had almost no other intention than to send to France a moral appeal on behalf of the peoples of Tunis and Morocco. But in the midst of the tactical cut and thrust came the unfortunate news of serious disorders in Morocco, involving several deaths. It almost looked as though grave events were imminent both there as well as in Tunis. This proved exaggerated but the disorders were nevertheless the reason why, both from the point of view of tactics and that of time, much more attention was devoted to Tunis and Morocco than had originally been intended.

We were now in a delicate situation if we were not to end up with a loss in prestige through our *démarche* at the United Nations producing no result. We were in constant consultation with our friends to find a way out. One would have been to transfer the Austrian question to the *Ad Hoc* Commission which dealt with sudden emergencies. This would undoubtedly have been better

than postponement to an uncertain new year, but it was worse than consideration in the Political Committee.

Views and opinions were exchanged. Only Ambassador Muniz, the Chairman of the Political Committee, declared with absolute certainty that the Austrian question *would* be discussed in his Committee and, what was more, before Christmas. With his quiet determination and optimism he was to be proved right in the end. In the meantime the Arab states informed us that they were ready to agree to a postponement of the discussions on Morocco to a later session of the Council. But this proposal met with the opposition of the French who, once they were involved in the debate, had no wish to risk new propaganda slights at the next session. We had enough trouble to steer our way through these two fronts without endangering our own position. Our relations with the Arab states were in any case delicate enough: they had previously declared that any Austrian attempt at concluding a reparations agreement with Israel similar to that concluded by Germany would automatically cost us their support. Again we had to dance on hot bricks in order, on the one hand, not to upset the Israelis altogether and, on the other, not to lose the votes of the Arab delegations.

In spite of all obstacles a plan was finally worked out which brought Austria forward from the sixth to the fourth place. But for this we needed the approval of the Americans for they had tabled the motions on those items that had been passed over. Would we receive enough votes for this proposal? Only two hours before the voting, experts in United Nations procedure warned us against such a risky enterprise.

We stuck to our guns, and the motion to change the agenda, bringing Austria forward to item four, was approved by a large majority. The Soviet delegate was so taken aback by this tactical *coup* that only his third secretary was present at the voting. For lack of instructions he only made a short colourless, almost a stumbling speech. His decision gave us our first important moral victory at the United Nations. A few days later the Moroccan question was settled and Austria came up for discussion under the solemn heading 'Question of an appeal to the Powers Signatories



to the Moscow Declaration of 1st November 1943 for an early fulfilment of their pledges towards Austria'

The Russian delegation, followed by its satellites, still protested at Austria being discussed inside the United Nations, which, they alleged, was legally incompetent to do so. Legal experts and diplomats from other states had to inform them that they were wrong. The Russians then concentrated on preventing an Austrian spokesman, a representative of a non-member state, from taking part in the debate. This argument lasted two hours whilst they tried behind the scenes to scare off some of the powers supporting us.

India was their chief target but our unrelenting efforts had their reward. Even though it was clearly without enthusiasm, Krishna Menon still declared himself ready to speak on behalf of Austria. This was of great help to us.

I had to wait for news of the exchanges outside the hall. Our observers came and went keeping us *in the loop* with every twist and turn of the struggle in the conference hall. Finally, the Mexican motion to invite Austria to present her viewpoint was approved. At last we could take our seats and speak on the agenda. For the first time since the foundation of the United Nations the name-plate of Austria shone prominently on the table of the other states. The numerous Austrians present at the debate noted the fact with deep emotion.

Ambassador Muniz wanted to have the debate opened by an introductory speech from the Brazilian delegate in conjunction with the declarations of the other co-sponsors. Then it would be the Austrian spokesmen's turn to speak. Hardly had the Brazilian delegate ended than Muniz turned to me to speak. But before I could do so, Poles, Czechs and Ukrainians jumped up, obviously intending to delay or even to prevent me beginning. In the circumstances I thought it wisest to sit back quietly and wait to see how this peculiar intervention would end.

A violent debate on procedure immediately broke out, not only between the Chairman and the Eastern states' experts in United Nations procedure, also intervened. The chief Persian delegate, Nassrollah Entezam, and Krishna Menon tried to find a mediating formula. In the end, the Chairman decided that it would be wise

to let the Eastern states speak next and several of them thereupon made almost identical declarations – there was no place for Austria at the United Nations, the responsibility for the delay in her treaty lay exclusively with the Western powers. They ended by declaring that they would take part neither in the debate nor in the eventual voting, an understandable attitude from their point of view. But Western delegates were not a little surprised when the Eastern bloc remained in its seats and listened to the debate without making any further attempts to interfere. Finally, it was my turn to speak. The climax to my remarks came when I declared that ‘... this dead-locked situation, these endless delays and adjournments suffered by our state treaty will not be accepted passively by the Austrian people. We do not care so much about the technical aspect of the treaty but we do care a great deal about its content and timing. The Austrian people want a prompt treaty, the burdens of which will be commensurate with our ability to pay. But, above all, we want a treaty which will be implemented very rapidly.’

‘We Austrians have proved our sense of responsibility towards the international community,’ I continued, ‘by imposing upon ourselves great restraint in the manifestation of our discontent, in view of the acute international situation. But I do not hesitate to declare that the dangers arising from the presence of foreign occupation troops in the midst of an increasingly angry population should be recognised.’

After seven years and a half of occupation I thought this a moderate statement, for which reason it made all the greater impact on the gathering. It also had the useful result of even persuading some of the Arab states to intervene on our behalf.

More than thirty delegates spoke in the debate. Those from India, Indonesia, Siam, the Lebanon and Abyssinia were outstanding. The Political Committee was evidently convinced that it really must do something to help us and thus a sort of ‘pro-Austria’ mood gradually developed, later to be of great value to us. The appeal was approved by an overwhelming majority.

It was unfortunately followed by a diplomatic interlude when Zafrullah Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, felt obliged to declare that because the Western powers had immorally broken

their promises regarding the resolution on Morocco, he could not bring himself to vote for the 'Austria resolution'. 'But may it never be suspected,' he added, 'that we like every other state, do not consider a rapid conclusion of the Austrian state treaty to be both necessary and the moral duty of the great powers.' After the session Zafrullah Khan came up to assure me that Pakistan was ready to give us every support but that Western manoeuvres had forced her to protest in this way at Western policy.

The Soviets were clearly taken aback by the unanimity of views in the Political Committee. They had always believed that the whole of our United Nations *demure* was a put up job by the Americans and were therefore quite prepared to see it supported by the more closely allied Western powers. But they did not foresee such great Western interest in Austria as would overcome the obvious time-table difficulties. Only this lack of foresight could explain how the Communist press in Austria jubilantly forecast that our United Nations appeal would end inconclusively—it would either be relegated to the *Ad Hoc* Commission—which they called a refuse dump—or the whole debate would be postponed to the Greek Kalends.

But the Soviets in growing astonishment were now forced to see that it was by no means the Western powers that were to the fore but the Latin American states, seconded by the countries of the Arab and Asiatic blocs. The latter was a particularly painful blow to Gromyko for it had hitherto always been thought possible to restrain in India ever concerned for her neutrality, from supporting even a move motivated by justice and humanity and not by power politics.

This awareness may have speeded up the Soviet decision to put on a better display in their Viennese shop window for on this, they were forced to realise depended the world's opinion of the possibility of co-existence. And on this opinion depended also Soviet policy's possibility of manoeuvre. In any case, the influence of the United Nations debate and perhaps also of our moderate declaration led to a rapid improvement in our personal relations with the Soviet delegation.

Zarubin, who occasionally represented Gromyko in the Political

Committee, replied cordially to my greeting when we met one day and proved most anxious to have a talk with me. A little later he informed me that he himself had to go to Washington but that Gromyko would always be available. That same evening I visited Gromyko at his permanent headquarters in Park Avenue.

Our discussion, as usual, was not only polite and friendly but it also seemed to me to provide a jumping off point for new discussions on Austria. When I asked Gromyko whether he was really ready to vote for a four-power appeal to conclude the state treaty (for the treaty was, after all, the declared objective of the Soviet Union) his reply was a nice example of dry Russian humour. 'How would an appeal to the Soviet Union help you? If you had proposed an appeal to the three guilty Western powers then I would certainly have voted for it.' The real meaning of a conversation of this kind had to be divined from what was left unsaid. Mostly, we went over the old ground again even though with more candour. But somehow I had the impression that something new was afoot—the search for a real understanding. It was a great encouragement in the next few weeks in our efforts to get the talks on Austria resumed.

On the whole we were well satisfied with the results of our trip. All the debates had been carried to the American and world public by press, radio and television. We had gained the sympathy of numerous American politicians and I had also been able to discuss the urgency of our problems with John Foster Dulles, the newly appointed Republican Secretary of State.

But most important of all, of course, was the effect on Austrian public opinion which, for the first time for many years, felt that a fresh dynamic element had re-entered the conduct of its affairs. Public morale, especially in Vienna and the Eastern Zone, was much strengthened, all the more so as other signs of a slow change in the political climate became visible.

From the tactical angle we succeeded in getting the Russians back to the conference table after their long absence. It was at a Deputies' session in London and although it produced no results, it did at least show that the Russians were now looking for a new approach.

## Chapter Twenty-one



### Freedom in Sight?

Socialist gains in elections at the end of 1952 and again at the beginning of 1953, led to my being joined at the Foreign Ministry by a Socialist Secretary of State, Dr Bruno Kreisky. This had the disadvantage of entailing lengthy discussions before any fresh steps could be undertaken but also the advantage of ensuring a better co-ordination of the views of the two main parties in foreign affairs.

A visit to Bonn by Dr Kreisky and myself to discuss Austro-German relations was our first joint move. The Germans in the North could only number their national existence in decades. But our population had for centuries played a dominating rôle in the Danube Monarchy, which for all its internal difficulties and friction had given to many smaller peoples external security and economic prosperity. The destruction of this power was bound to nourish pro-Anschluss tendencies in an Austria reduced to a tenth of her former size and importance and cut off from her natural hinterland.

Furthermore, the great powers did not even do the minimum of what their own self-interest demanded to strengthen the Austrian will to independence. The petty and, often enough, the shabby policy of many European states *vis-à-vis* Austria was perhaps the best breeding-ground for these trends.

Those who favoured an Anschluss, either in Germany or Austria, overlooked the fact that any political action must serve the long-term interests of the peoples concerned. But an action that was bound to disturb Germany's more important task of occupying a leading place in the European community could not be compensated for by an apparent increase in power as the result of an increase in territory. Those who are accustomed to think only in military terms will find the protection of the Alps invaluable. But for others, Austrian scenery is no substitute for the destruction of international confidence. A Franco-German understanding, which is essential to the unity of Europe, would die a sudden death or.

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the day that Bonn's (or Berlin's) industrial and demographic supremacy were apparently further increased by a renewal of pro-Anschluss tendencies

But if these arguments sound too rationalistic, it must at least be admitted that the experiences of the last war have shown that the re-establishment of the European status of both countries is of far greater urgency than any fresh political adventure. The younger generation has fortunately found another end to both countries a more digestible form of European unity, by removing the thorn from the Franco-German conflict.

It was clear therefore, that the interests of both Germany and Austria demanded that the world be reassured. But it would be utopian to believe that in view of our cultural affinity, lively intellectual interchange and consciousness of belonging to a common community, a policy could be pursued that sought to escape from the dangers of too close a neighbourliness, only to fall into a sort of fanatical anti-Germanism. Such a policy, as unjustified as it was harmful to Austrian interests, would have been quite impossible. It could not even be justified by concern for our immediate aims—a state treaty and an improvement in our internal situation. But between these two extremes it was certainly not easy to find the middle path of friendship, mutual sympathy and readiness to help. It was even less easy to make the great powers understand the necessity of such a policy. What is more—and this is often overlooked—its possibility does not depend on Austria alone. It can only be gradually possible to develop such a policy, provided that the same awareness of political necessity and of the politically possible is present in Germany and propagandist clumsiness is avoided.

But exaggerated haste would be a mistake. Events that today arouse a storm of indignation will tomorrow be accepted without further ado if matters are ripe. Much as certain Austrian circles urged the rapid development of our relations with Germany, our policy of not rushing things proved right. We were determined to ensure that the external symptom of full normality—an official state visit—took place at a time marked by the existence of a sober European public opinion.

The German government fortunately supported us in our endeavour. Dr Adenauer is a realist and he and his colleagues were all dominated by that philosophy of limited aims which alone is able to raise the standing of a state. As early as 1951 I had a very detailed discussion with Adenauer and Professor Hallstein, his Secretary of State, at the Hotel Bristol in Paris. We talked of international politics at length but bent about the bush where real problems were concerned. That sly, old Rhineland fox, if I may express myself so disrespectfully, is well versed in the art of quietly avoiding the dangers of a delicate topic by the right joke at the right time. Chancellor Rüb is the only other person I know with the same skill. Those talks in Paris taught us each other's true value and produced a better political understanding, both on the Danube and the Rhine. In all discretion these initial contacts were further developed. We cast about for ways to cut a clear path through the political and legal jungle of post-war treaties, declarations and Allied decrees. Nor must it be forgotten that from 1945 onwards, despite every difficulty, we had built up excellent trading relations.

A visit to Bonn was several times arranged but rapid political developments had again and again brought obstacles and higher considerations which necessitated postponement. However, by 18th May 1953 everything was in order. Our talks in Bonn are still too recent for details to be revealed and in any case our general political discussion was of greater importance. We wanted to make it clear to Adenauer and his colleagues that Austria's political position is basically different from that of Germany. Germany is a country that the Russians divided in two from the very outset. Therefore the task of the German Government could only be to strengthen the economic power of West Germany, build up renewed international confidence and above all work out a *modus vivendi* with the occupying powers in order to create the best pre-conditions for future reunification. Any undue haste could hardly bring practical benefit. It was far too late to be able to protect the East German population against Communist excesses.

Austria's fate had been different, as all my previous remarks have shown. Our country is united, and its partition would not only have involved the political destiny of the state, but also

exposed thousands upon thousands to Communist arbitrariness. Austria could not possibly take any political action that might have led to a partition of the country. This did not exclude realistic efforts to put our relations with the West on a firm basis. Despite all our criticism of the attitude of the Western powers and our numerous disappointments there was no doubt that danger did not threaten us from *that* direction in view of our similar culture and identical political systems. But for all our fulfilment of this obvious task, Austria had also always to be aware of the necessity of putting her relationship with the Eastern bloc, and particularly with the Soviet occupying power, on a harmonious basis. That is why, despite all our sympathies for the European idea we could not take part in the demonstrative phase of European organisations and had to hold ourselves aloof in many spheres where a West German Federal Government could move freely and unhindered.

Adenauer, the realist, understood our position perfectly. The German Government was also interested in our assessment of the different forces at work inside the great powers. It is obvious that what we learnt of the scope and limits of German political activity was of the greatest value. Bonn politicians for instance, told us they thought the neutralisation of Germany was neither possible nor desirable.

Our discussions on concrete issues embraced a long list of items. In so far as circumstances made it at all possible we exchanged views on matters relating to German assets in Austria. Above all we had to make it clear that the same principles could not be applied in the treatment of the so-called trust assets as in the case of actual private property.

During our short visit it was hardly possible to clarify all the complex legal, political and economic questions at issue between us. This made it a most important task to establish in Vienna an authorised German spokesman and to this end we urged for Bonn to send us a trade mission. This arrangement met with less opposition from the Russians than from Western officials. The ill-advised plotting which was immediately unleashed against the plan could not but be matter for reflection on the motives of certain Allied authorities.



Both the political and the diplomatic aspect of our visit passed off in complete harmony, to our great rejoicing. We could never have avoided Communist outcries, and certain rumour-mongers (from East and West) were hard at work in Vienna spreading the myth that the Soviets had not appeared at new discussions on the state treaty because Gruber had gone to Bonn. This nonsense even had parliamentary committees on foreign affairs repeatedly asking whether intervention by a neutral power could not have provided us with more information on Russian policy. *25-27*  
Vienna

The idea was of course no new one to us. In 1952 we had already contacted the Indian Government on these lines. And at the Coronation ceremonies in London during which we must have set a new world record for quick changes, I had discussions with Mr Nehru, the Indian Premier, to hear his views on future political developments. But Nehru, like ourselves, was too much in demand to be able to speak in peace and quiet on such a wide topic. A visit to Burgersstock on the Lake of Lucerne was therefore arranged as Nehru wanted to go there to relax after the London Commonwealth Conference.

Before my departure for Vienna I spent an hour at the Soviet Embassy in a discussion with Mr Jacob Malik, the Soviet Ambassador to London. I hammered out our old waltz—only a constructive Soviet policy in Austria could restore European confidence to such an extent as to create the pre conditions to the solution of more important problems. But Malik's thoughts returned again and again to the German problem. This led me to say a few words on the subject. German public opinion undoubtedly paid great attention to what went on in Austria, I said. But the present austere conditions in Vienna could certainly exercise no power of attraction on German public opinion. So long as Russia had nothing better to offer than the shoddy Viennese shop-window then, I concluded, apart from a handful of Communists, she would never win over anyone to support plans which presupposed putting considerable trust in Soviet policy. Malik's reply was naturally a repetition of the Soviet thesis that the West bore the responsibility for conditions in Austria. But it seemed to

me nevertheless that my way of looking at things was not without interest to Soviet diplomacy

When we met Mr Nehru together with a number of Indian diplomats at Burgenstock, my first task was to describe the long and thorny path trod by the Austrian state treaty. The special significance of this meeting lay in the fact that India more than any other power was convinced that a *modus vivendi* with Russia was possible without having to run the risk of Communist infiltration. The Indians told us that in their view two problems pre-occupied Russia in relation to Austria: our future relations with Germany, and with the Atlantic Pact. The Austrian Government had long since laid down the policy on both points and therefore we only needed to refer to the corresponding declarations in Parliament. Austria, and, we added, Germany also, was not out for any form of Anschluss at all.

But Austria, even if she had to meet Soviet criticism, could not renounce regular economic, cultural and political relations with her big neighbour and important trading partner. Austrian policy must be based on Austrian convictions, which, in their turn, were based on the need for such friendly relations: we added. Anything that went beyond this belonged to the realm of fantasy or malicious invention.

As far as the Atlantic Pact was concerned, the Federal Government had repeatedly declared that Austria would not join any military bloc. Not least, I myself had stated this at a press conference at Bonn. But to say this was the limit of what was tolerable for the Western powers, and, what must also not be forgotten, for our own population as well, if we were not to give strength to the suspicion that Austria would be engulfed by the Eastern bloc.

It must be emphasised that the Indian Premier was fully aware that the Russians were not the only people who had interests to assert in the 'Austria-complex', but that this applied equally to the Western powers. We could easily give the former reassurances about our military commitments but we could not grant them any option on our political future which was bound to bring us into conflict with the West. That this view of our overall policy was held by so independent a man as Nehru we considered to be of great importance.

Our conversations also brought to light the activities of rumour-mongers who had succeeded in spreading a cloud of suspicion over our relations with Germany. There was never any question of Indian mediation but solely the fact that India's world-wide contacts could give us a better picture of Soviet intentions than our own resources. It was significant of the way certain correspondents visualised their duty that first they spread the fabrication of our having asked for mediation, in order to have their own fabrication later denied by India. It was a waste of time, we thought, to question such sharp practices.

Other neutral sources also helped us in our evaluation of Soviet intentions, even if only by way of diminution. Reports from neutral diplomats in Moscow, for example, led us to conclude, as we had indeed already suspected, that until further notice the renewal of negotiations on Austria would depend on the international situation. The Soviet government was not yet ready to make known the full scope of the contractual obligations that were demanded of us. Moscow was not interested in a declaration of non-alliance.

This was in apparent contradiction to their tactics in Vienna where almost overnight they prepared not of course to conclude the treaty, but to relax quite perceptibly the rigours of occupation. In quick succession they lifted their demand for exit permits at the zonal demarcation lines, exchanged ambassadors, replaced their military by a civilian High Commissioner and, to crown it all, renounced their occupation cost.

Internally, these Russian tactics led to some uncertainty. We had always been of the view—and this was accentuated by the practical and businessmen's outlook of the new Chancellor, Dr Raab, whom the Russians greatly esteemed—that we must not make a diplomatic and political settlement of the Austrian question psychologically difficult for them. But it was clear that they wanted their new policy to give the impression that Austria had entered a new phase in her relations with the Eastern bloc.

We had no objection to friendship so long as we made no vague and indefinite pledges in favour of the Communists of a kind to compromise our overall policy.

It has already been pointed out that in the view of many observers the rigid outlook of the United States State Department experts threatens to over estimate the legal aspect of international politics. Soviet successes in Eastern Europe were not gained through the power of treaties but through the presence of the Red Army or other means of political pressure, such as a Communist-infiltrated administration. The danger of Communist infiltration does not so much lie in legal agreements with the Soviet Union as in the latter's actual political presence. The legal standard against which the West now and again measured Austria's future position in Europe was, and remains inadequate. On the other hand, if it were simply a question of defining our legal status vis-à-vis the great powers in such a way as to make our commitments clear and to ensure that only the unanimous interpretation of the five contracting parties—the United States, Russia, France, Great Britain and ourselves—could be valid, then there was no need for alarm.

But what would be dangerous would be a conception of neutrality that allowed the Soviets to decide unilaterally whether such and such an Austrian action was neutral or to intervene in Austrian internal affairs, including personal policy. In a word the danger of such a policy would lie in a situation where more and more far-reaching concessions for the sake of goodwill appeasement or simply the evasion of difficulties had to be made. The objective of the Austrian Government must be to lay the way to a policy of this kind—but not to prevent the conclusion of a reasonable treaty.

Thus in December 1955 we suggested to the Soviet Union the opening of talks on a trade treaty. After the first relaxations of the occupation regime this proposal was supplemented by an offer to put the whole of the *Leviathan complex* on a new basis by transferring the factories to Austria in return for deliveries to the U.S.S.R. from current production.

These proposals were repeated and garnished with a few friendly trimmings in a memorandum delivered to Moscow when our envoy there, Norbert Bischoff, was raised to the rank of ambassador. The same document was also sent to the Western powers. But when Moscow quoted the document in a note on the state treaty, an official spokesman of one of the Western governments pretended

to know nothing of such a memorandum. A glance at the text quoted by Moscow would have shown him at once the only thing it could be. This incident showed the incredible lack of precision with which people worked even where a diplomatic tradition would have led one to expect something very different. A violent rustling of documents was the consequence of this new confusion. The agitation was not set at rest until a detailed debate in Parliament brought clarification. Later, the Soviet Union categorically demanded a formal renunciation of the short treaty. This was matter for discussion provided the Soviets for their part were prepared to lift the veil of secrecy concealing their future policy on the long treaty. *We had no doubt that they were urgently seeking a detente. But is it what they wanted to buy it is cheaply as possible.*

But time is pressing. Rearmament has its own laws, bringing ever nearer the danger of a conflict between East and West. Will diplomats be able to overcome their traditional inclination to slowness and immobility and reach a practical understanding before it is too late?

Many factors indicate that this time the turn to a realistic policy of *detente* is permanent. Be that as it may, every thing comes to him who waits.

The Austrian people were not inactive in the shadow of these events. In spite of every difficulty, their internal freedom gave the urge to progress and economic consolidation. A forthright and realistic financial policy provided a firm basis for social advance. Slowly and imperceptibly the external independence of the country also began to grow. The path ahead is still steep and thorny. But the Austrian people, economically consolidated and with their morale unbroken, can look forward to the final phase of their tough struggle for freedom.

## European Unity, the EDC and the Schuman Plan

The historic moment for the creation of a united Europe was the early summer of 1945. With the exception of Switzerland, Spain and Portugal, Allied troops had occupied virtually the whole of continental Europe. No government could have lasted a month without American financial aid and food supplies. If the American troops had come equipped with a plan to create an economically integrated and politically unified Europe, then they would have met with the enthusiastic support of the broad masses. Had a united market lasted only two years, then perhaps it would never have fallen apart.

But we know that no such plan existed, that policy in the occupied areas was one of economic separation, of autonomous occupation zones and even of districts under autonomous battalions. No one is to blame for this, for the idea of the 'United Nations' dominated everything and nobody even dreamed that the whole of the free world, or Europe, at least, would very soon have to defend itself against a new enemy. And it was the idea of 'One World' that presided at the birth of the United Nations. It was thought possible for the most diverse and even antagonistic systems of government to live side by side at peace under a sort of world government. But political experience shows that without political homogeneity no community can be founded. Only later was it realised that the United Nations resembles rather a permanent conference of ambassadors than a world government. In 1945 the idea of a 'united Europe' was not yet politically mature and the United States themselves were still too deeply imprisoned in their classic policy of 'non-intervention' for them to be able to become the executive force behind such a 'union'.

Short of war, a historic moment as was 1945 will not so easily recur. And a new war with its probable widespread destruction would demand a new European order of one kind or another.

even without any theoretical programme. But once the 'period of illusions', as it has been termed, was over, then the unification of Europe became the battle-cry of American policy in Europe. Even here there were significant differences between what Americans and Europeans considered politically possible. The ideal of a united Europe was enthusiastically seized on by the masses and particularly by the intellectual youth. What is more, this happened where one would have least expected it, namely in Germany and Austria. German youth embraced the idea with a characteristic lack of critical application. This could be partly explained by the fact that the old Socialist ideal of a world embracing International, the Nazi idea of a united Europe under German domination and last but not least, the Catholic ideal of the moral unity of mankind had provided in one form or another a favourable soil for the growth of European ideals. Initially, the interpretation of these aims may of course have varied according to the individuals' political background but it is young people especially who are never petty and gladly willing to discard part of their prejudices once they have made a certain ideal their own. Whenever witnesses reported the enthusiastic uprooting and burning of frontier posts at the French frontier it was hard to insert a word of warning on future difficulties and thus guard against disillusion.

This warning was all the more needed for the United States expected of European unity something that in the circumstances it certainly could not provide – an answer to all the emergency problems with which the cold and dull confronted statesmen. The democratic association of historic nations in a new unit cannot produce fruitful results in a few years such as would be required rapidly to build up a new and integrated power factor. Force, perhaps, or the effects of war might bring it about but not where politicians and bureaucrats have to undertake to win over a hesitant public opinion to support radical innovations.

An answer to the emergency problem – the defence of Europe – can only be found in the classic methods of coalitions and alliances, that is to say, in a system of political measures aimed at reinforcing national governments, uniting them politically and organising their armies for joint defence. That is the very reason why the attempt

to lump together the primary task of defence with the unification of Europe is a move towards gradual world-betterment, could only arouse doubt. It is quite unrealistic to suppose that the locomotive of European unification will reach its destination any the quicker merely because a label marked 'Urgent-European Defence' is hung on it. In my lectures to American Universities and clubs I always tried to prove to the American public that the European complex of problems must be clearly separated into 'emergency measures', that call for solution along the classic lines of diplomacy and politics and into 'long range measures'. Here attention must be paid to the tempo imposed by differing national temperaments, differing parliamentary techniques and by the necessity for the systematic education of public opinion.

All this must be borne in mind when the practical steps that have been taken to further European integration are considered. From as early as 1945 America had given massive aid to every European country, without at first any discrimination on the score of their internal policy. That was certainly generous but unprofitable for it is not good politics to help a presumptive enemy. Be that as it may, this early period was soon overcome and replaced by the comprehensive Marshall Plan. This was the first co-ordinated reply to the problems posed by Europe. Its aim was to rob Communists of their capacity for infiltration by strengthening the economies of the European states. But it was also quite clear that the American Government and still more American public opinion, cherished the hope that with the Marshall Plan and the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation, that was founded in 1948, they had created an instrument for the rapid integration of Europe.

The attempt was not unskilful, and was looked on as such by the representatives of most European states who seriously intended to put it into practice. Of course, in the initial stages the absence of Western Germany restricted the possibilities of integration, and, still more so, the lack of unanimity amongst the leading states concerning future developments. From the beginning Great Britain occupied the key position in all these questions, but her conception of European co-operation was so typical of her traditional attitude



that it was bound to come into constant conflict with American impatience. The representatives of the smaller state which enjoyed a certain tolerance on the part of France and Italy, were the first to be ready to push matters forward, Spain and later Van Zeeland, the Irish and ourselves took a number of measures to secure the still greater influence in the integration of Europe. But these efforts had soon to be abandoned for it became quite clear that the English Scandinavian group was not prepared to allow integration to proceed at a faster tempo. This attitude was bound up especially with the British position inside the Commonwealth and the sterling bloc, in other words with the fear that a closer link with the continent might weaken her position as senior partner in the bloc. Very soon these differing tactics openly collided with the American attempt to speed up developments. In private, bitter criticism was often to be heard of the 'yes-but' speeches, despite all the energetic efforts made by Paul Hoffman, the Administrator of the Marshall Plan and by Averell Harriman, Ambassador in London, to overcome opposition to American intentions.

It was at this time that the Strasbourg organisation was founded. It was economically of great benefit to Europe as a whole and the system of distributing dollars had become a model form of international collaboration. The European Payments Union was founded and considerable strides made in the direction of liberalisation. Behind these scenes the developments gave rise to much debate. In the meetings of the Strasbourg Assembly optimists saw the beginning of a golden age in Europe, pessimists thought the whole thing in evasive manoeuvre, a piece of window dressing to keep an impatient United States Congress quiet. It is not easy to say whether optimists or pessimists showed the greater degree of political insight. Strasbourg was not much but it did at least enable people to meet, get to know each other's problems and exchange experiences, and it also offered a propaganda platform for the spreading of the concept of Europe. But for the time being it was hardly a means for the rapid integration of Europe. For this very reason, it need cause no surprise that the zeal of the European optimists soon led to the closer co-operation of certain European states

outside the sterling bloc. The Schuman Plan, known officially as the coal and steel pool, and the European Defence Community were the organisational expression of this zeal.<sup>1</sup>

The Schuman Plan was undoubtedly a genuine means to create a unified market in a very important field. But the difficulty of a treaty limited to a few products only is that it does not offer the participating states much possibility of recompense for the sacrifices they must incur. The essence of a unified market is that production is concentrated at the most favourable site. There are of course many products where the site is relatively unimportant, for instance, where freight costs are insignificant or where the proximity of the consumer is more important than raw material sources. But coal and steel come into another category. In the case of hardly any other product do the advantages of a favourable site play a greater part. States which have built up their own steel industry at great effort and are now forced to close it down—if the meaning of a common market is to be fully realised—do not easily find suitable reward for the sacrifices that the establishment of the industry has required. The full advantages of a unified market do not emerge until it is extended to every type of product and until the advantages of the mass production of certain goods cancel out the disadvantages of removing production from the locality on which it really depends.

From this point of view the official consistent policy of liberalisation was an important step towards the re-establishment of the international division of labour such as had existed in Europe before 1914, despite national sovereignty. Although the latter was theoretically much more closely circumscribed than was later the case, its effect on the individual national economy was only barely perceptible owing to a liberal economic policy and the operation of *laissez faire* and *laissez passer*. The full advantages of the iron and steel community would probably not emerge until many other centres of production took the same path.

To couple the European Defence Community with the Strasbourg organisation concealed greater problems. It has already been

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the French Parliament's rejection of the European Defence Community and the consequent abandonment of the project.

pointed out that the EDC was planned as a typical 'emergency measure' so as to provide an effective means of defence against Russian pressure. It is too well known to need repeating that the idea of a 'European Army' represents a compromise formula between the desire to include German contingents with the maximum possible speed in the organisation of European defence and the opposition of non-German public opinion to the unconditional rearmament of Germany.

But for the Council of Europe the conglomeration of unsolved political problems was a barrier that could be surmounted only with difficulty, on the path to the gradual development of the European idea. The demands of a practical policy of alliances could be expected to collide with the more general efforts to build up European institutions. It was bound to make it more difficult for them to broaden their base to include those states that were represented in the OEEC but not in the Council of Europe. It may well be doubted therefore, whether the coupling of the two organisations, however loosely, was very practical from the political angle. This connection between the European Defence Community and the Council of Europe was what also made it difficult for us to come to a final decision, although Austrian public opinion is perhaps more European minded than any other. The European ideal has had a more far-reaching and profound effect on our thinking than is commonly realised.

But our situation as an occupied country demanded constant care, so that it was impossible for decisions to be taken solely in accordance with the general sentiment of the population. My own view was always that the pros and cons must be evenly balanced. Were Europe in actual fact a powerful organisation, or at least not far from becoming one, then the additional risks inherent in our adhesion would perhaps be counter-balanced by this very fact. But for understandable reasons there can be no talk of that for some time yet. We decided therefore to give Parliament the opportunity to proclaim its European sentiments and to participate in practical efforts at integration! but without making the Government legally liable for the decisions of Strasbourg.

People outside Austria repeatedly told us that Russian policy

*vis-à-vis* ourselves would hardly be made dependent on our membership of the Strasbourg organisation, particularly in view of our membership of the O.E.E.C. But that is no way to argue. As is explained elsewhere, Russian political decisions will not be influenced to any great extent by the paper bullets discharged by diplomatic artillery. But for our important task of preserving a united Austria patriotism and keeping alive the spirit of resistance to Communism it is highly necessary not to present the Soviets with any cheap excuse to justify their own measures by reference to those of the Austrian government. Moreover, Austria could hardly be expected to take risks which her wealthier neighbour Switzerland was not prepared to take. If Europe were a reality, then there would no longer be any Russian pressure to fear and the freedom of decision restored. But as Europe is at the moment more of an idealistic proclamation than a power-political reality, the consequences spoke for themselves as far as we were concerned.

This obvious weakness of the supra-national European organisation must not however be allowed to hide the fact that within the framework of the traditional policy of European alliances there prevails more unity of will than in most of the coalitions known to history. The relationship of the European states to each other may best be compared to that of a group of travellers who have for some time been walking side by side through the open countryside. Suddenly they are commanded to jump over a deep ditch, without ever having practised this manœuvre before and without adequate knowledge of what awaits them on the other side. It is not surprising that the travellers first make a lengthy halt whilst each seeks for means of crossing the ditch best suited to his own individual capacities and powers of observation.

As the ideal of a new and better international order and as the means to raise the level of material well-being, Europe is making satisfactory progress; but in the last resort politicians and statesmen cannot accomplish more than what public opinion will allow. Where commercial policies are concerned, an official can only put up with an immediate disadvantage to his country if the population's will to see a united Europe has become strong enough to tolerate it for the sake of future advantages. Only Europe is not moving ahead

with enough speed for the American conception of an 'emergency measure'. Politically, it would be valuable to realise that a wild mustang is not easily broken in to take part in a cavalry charge.

No one should succumb to the pessimistic view that a united Europe cannot be realised at all by democratic methods. But it is obvious that it is not so much practical obstacles that prevent progress but the need to clarify preliminary questions of policy. An organisation which depends on the assent of all its members, can never achieve any more than the least enthusiastic of its members will allow. Thus what is most important is the correct assessment of the will to unity, because only on this basis can the possibility of progress be charted.

In so doing, certain matters of principle must first be clarified. The difficulties are almost the same, no matter whether a really radical solution is sought or lesser steps in the direction of unification are planned. But only in the case of a radical solution do the advantages of a unified market become apparent. It is clear, however, that should one of the states whose participation is valued not agree to a radical solution, then the interests of propaganda and European education demand that the reasons why only limited steps are possible, be made clear to all. European enthusiasm may otherwise easily turn into its opposite.

It is always possible, of course, to take a series of practical steps. A united constitution, for example, can undoubtedly be worked out containing the minimum required for a genuinely new supra-national solution. A draft of this kind can be valuable in itself even if it has no prospect of being ratified immediately, for it facilitates concentration on the ultimate aim.

Europe would greatly benefit if the duration of parliaments and governments could be made uniform, if it could be assumed that elections took place on the same day in every participating state, electing parliaments for a period in office that would enable them to assume legal responsibility for their policies. It would, of course, be incomparably more difficult to draw up a constitution guaranteeing, together with parliaments, a government for a specified period, as is the case in Great Britain and Switzerland. But there is no question of the advantages that this would entail for those

states that have hitherto suffered most from political instability. The example of Switzerland proves that elections need not be based on a majority voting system but that it is sufficient simply to elect ministers for a lengthy period and not constantly to subject them to the need of securing fresh votes of confidence.

The co-ordination of different territories into a unified market will be made easier if there is a certain measure of uniformity in economic legislation. Many states would certainly be ready, as the history of international commercial and economic law proves, to ratify such laws even if they are not yet ready to yield to the authority of a supra-national corporation. Supra-national agreements on investment policy, as is aimed at in the Schuman Plan, are also important pace-makers on the path to an eventual unified market. History shows that only minimal factors are necessary to keep the structure of a state in being or, as the case may be, to ensure the functioning of a unified market. The Austro-Hungarian monarchy, for example, had for decades only its army and its foreign policy in common. The example of the United States reveals astonishing legislative differences between one state and another. But the American economic miracle would certainly not have taken place if the dollar in Vermont were quoted differently from the dollar in Nevada, or if tolls or other barriers impeded the free passage of goods.

All this demonstrates that freedom from customs duties and currency union forms the backbone of any unified market, even though the autonomy of the territories to be united remains in other respects largely unaltered. In the last resort, the pressure of public opinion can enable a concrete programme of unification to be marked out, and gradually achieved through its realistic structure and its regard for the underlying views of the participating states. The special advantages of such a procedure lie in the fact that if discussion of the European idea constantly increases then the various national economies will spontaneously begin to accommodate themselves to the wider market of the future. Very soon investments would be tested against their profitability, not only within the framework of each country's economy but also in the light of their contribution to future unity.

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